

THE MODERN GUIDE TO COMICS AND MORE

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ESCAPE

NUMBER 12

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**NEW COMICS
REVIEWED:**

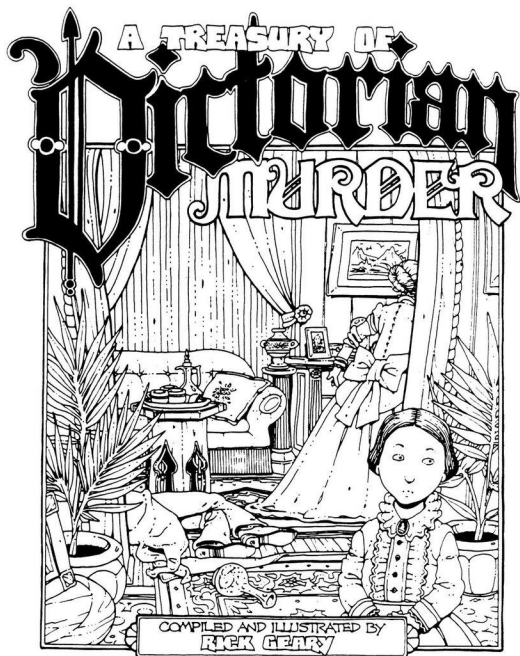
WINSOR McCAY
CALVIN AND HOBBS
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WATCHMEN COMPLETE

**WHAT'S
OUT.
DOC?**

The Best in ANIMATED Videos



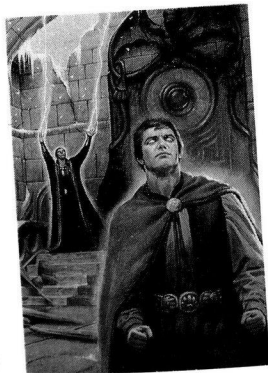
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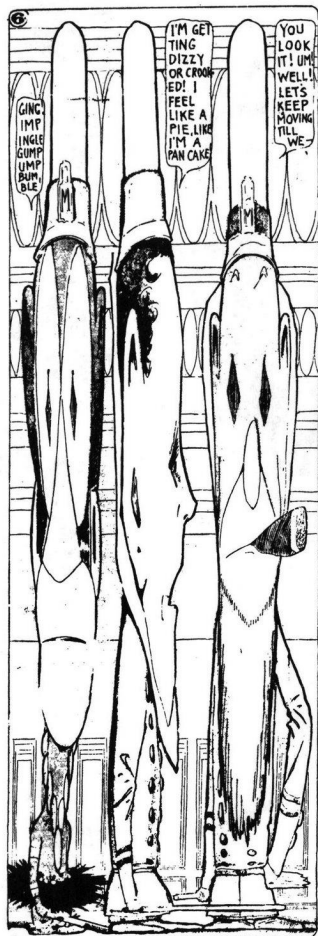
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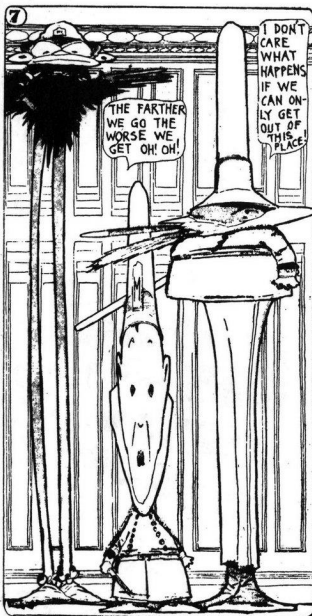
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HE MAY NOT HAVE INVENTED ANIMATED FILMS and comic strips, but without doubt Winsor McCay was their first great master. He brought his dreams to life in the exquisite newspaper strip 'Little Nemo in Slumberland' from 1905. The Hall of Mirrors distortions in the extract above show up later in his first animated film of Little Nemo in 1911. You can see this classic cartoon and others in the film programme of Comic Iconoclasm, opening at Manchester's Cornerhouse on January 12th. McCay's biography, 'Winsor McCay, His Life And Art', the most lavish ever about a cartoonist, has been written by animator John Canemaker, who has been involved with a feature-length film version of Little Nemo being prepared in Tokyo. Also on the team was French fantasist Moebius, who produced a whole series of story-board proposals.

EDITORIAL ADDRESS: 156 MUNSTER ROAD, LONDON SW6 5RA

TO ADVERTISE RING PAUL GRAVETT ON

01 731 1372

For Details of Rates, Sizes and Copy Deadlines

ESCAPE is published every two months by Titan Books Ltd. Publisher: Nick Landau

ESCAPE NUMBER 12 (ISSN 0266-1667)

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The SKP Barometer of Taste

ARTICLES

EDITED BY LOUISE TUCKER

1 Many a star from comics has grinned out of a watch-face before, but what's different about Sekonda's new quartz wrist-watches is the complete comic strip on the strap. Choose from Betty Boop, Andy Capp, Hagar and Popeye, £22.99 each.

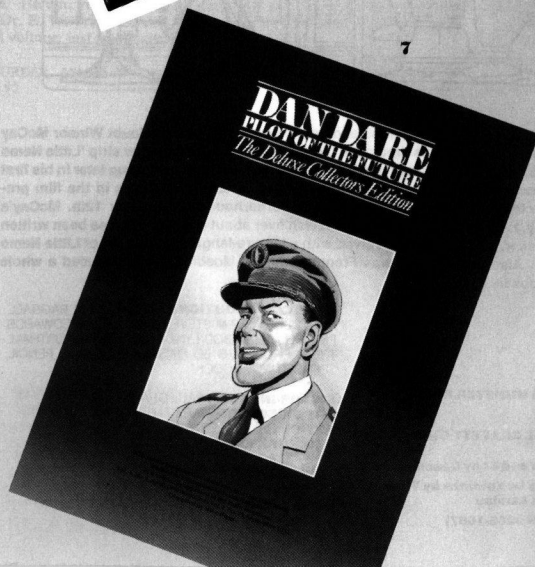
2 Now you can wake up 'Same Bat-Time!' every morning and leap to the Bat-Poles thanks to your Batman Alarm Clock in black or grey ceramic, £32.50 from Tokyo Boogie Beat, 17 Shorts Gardens, London WC2.

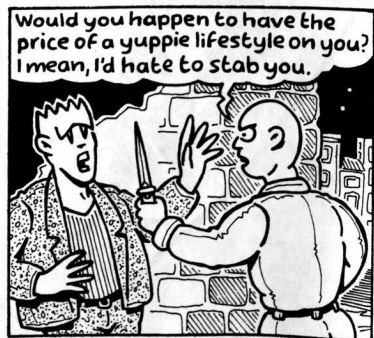
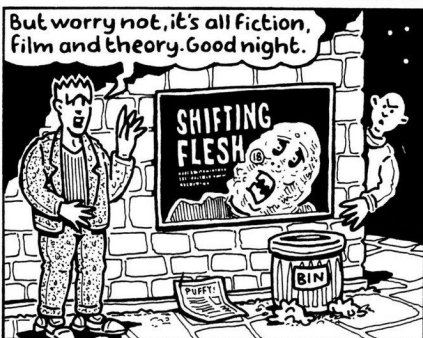
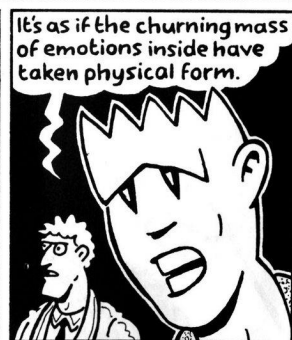
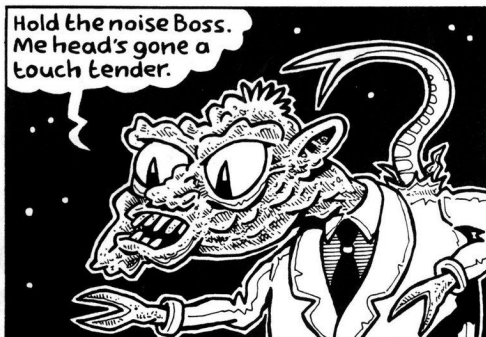
3 Make a date with George Herriman's 'I'l ainjils' in Coconino County. This Krazy Kat Kalendar has a different colour page for every month. Published by Abrams, who put out the sumptuous Krazy Kat book last year, \$8.95-£7.95 Import.

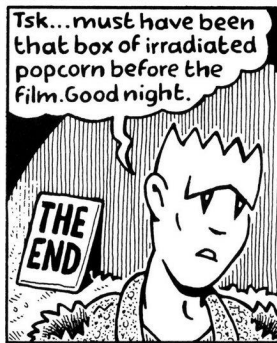
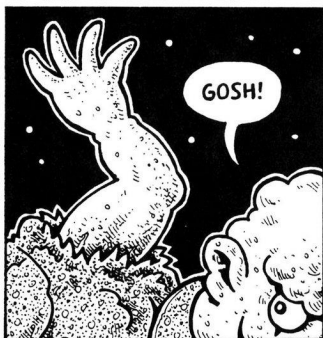
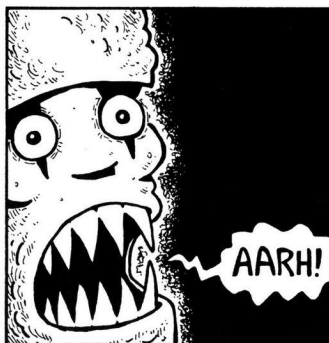
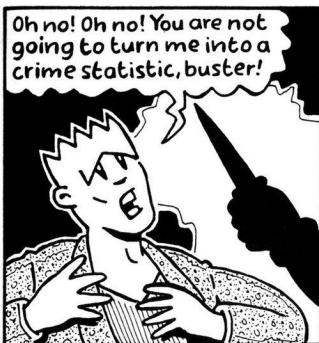
4 *Whatever Happened To Kerouac?* is a film 'bout the author of *On The Road*, playing from the New Year at: Chapter, Cardiff; Watershed, Bristol; Bradford & Glasgow Film Theatres; and Cornerhouse, Manchester. As for the portrait, it's the latest in a series of R. Crumb T-Shirt designs put out by Water Row Books, \$11.95. It also comes as a hand-printed \$10.00 each poster. From: PO Box 438, Sudbury, MA 01776, USA, adding postage (\$5 for airmail).

5 Calling all Damned Intellectuals! *Read Yourself RAW* is an anthology of the long-out-of-print RAW 1 to 3: the strips, covers, inserts (all eight Mark Beyer bubblegum cards) plus the true story behind the most influential comics magazine of the Eighties. Quippy, quirky and quintessential. Pantheon, \$14.95/£9.95 Import.

6 If you chew gum, or collect the cards and stickers that come with the stuff, then you're probably sick to death of the usual *My Little Pony* or *Football Morons* of the World fare. If you crave something a little more off the wall, then look no further than Chicago, home of the Piedmont Candy Co. They've come up with a card series entitled *Terrorist Attack: America Fights Back*, described as 'Educational Cards' on the front of the wax paper wrapper. Inside you'll find such classic carve-ups as 'Guards Kill Gandhi', 'The Pope Shot' and 'A Bomb For Thatcher', and cameo roles from such all-time great terrorists as Idi Amin, Yasir Arafat, Ayatollah Khomeini and Charles Manson, an all-American terrorist if ever there was one. Best card of the batch we've seen is 'Suicide Driver', which shows a bearded lunatic, grinning madly as he prepares to smash his car and booty of high explosives into the nearest foreign embassy. 'All of them should have their



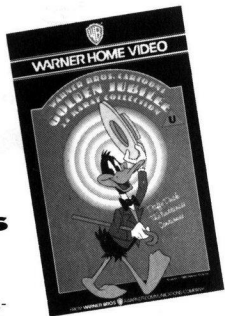
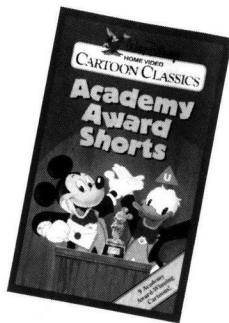




WHAT'S OUT, DOC?



The Best in ANIMATED Videos



Before you're swamped by television's tide of blanderised toy-based cartoons, remember 'Th-th-th-that's NOT all folks!'. Become a Re-Animator with this guide to the peaks—and the pitfalls—of animation old and new available on video, and re-programme some all-time classics into your viewing.

TOO MANY OF TODAY'S cartoons are little more than extended commercials for the latest toy craze. Video shops consign almost everything animated to the bottom shelves and on television some fine animation gets stripped of its opening credits, introduced by children's comperes or poked in at odd hours to plug awkward gaps in the schedule. Surely the greats of animation deserve better than this?

Now no more ploughing aimlessly through row upon row of cassettes. You've got the Cartoonal Knowledge to track down the very best of animation on video to buy or hire. Most tapes come in VHS or Beta, but British and American systems are not compatible, worst luck. Perhaps some enterprising video companies will fill some of the major gaps in this cartoon cornucopia. When they do, we'll let you know.

Today most people expect sound, and preferably colour too, on telly, so animation on video only goes as far back as 'Steamboat Willie', Mickey Mouse's 1928 debut and Walt Disney's first synchronised 'talkie'. None of the earlier silent classics, from McCay's own 'Little Nemo' to barely recognisable adaptations of 'Krazy Kat', are available on video; not even 'Felix the Cat', who, before Disney's dynasty, was one of the biggest cartoon stars of the Twenties. With his clever sight gags and flights of fan-

tasy, Felix 'kept on walking' through newspaper strips and into a TV revival in 1960, now on tape **FELIX THE CAT** (MV), in which the Professor and Rock Bottom plot to steal his bag of tricks.

Vintage Disney is in much better supply. 'Steamboat Willie' is one of seven classics on **MICKY LIMITED GOLD** (WB), with Uncle Walt himself providing Mickey's early shill tones. Minnie, Donald, Goofy and Pluto all have their own **LIMITED GOLD** compilations too. There are plenty of firsts on **ACADEMY AWARD SHORTS** (WB), all of them winners: Disney's first colour cartoon, 'Flowers and Trees'; the film credited as his first personality animation, 'The Three Little Pigs'; and his multiplane special effects test, 'The Old Mill'. **SILLY SYMPHONIES** (WB) contains eleven Thirties shorts, though it's missing the spooky tom-toms and xylophones of 'The Skeleton Dance'. Still all these are indispensable!

Other seminal characters are harder to come by. At the Fleischer Studio, Bimbo the dog needed a companion, and sketches for a pudgy poodle blossomed into that cutie-cute sexpot Betty Boop. She warded off dozens of attempts on her virginity through the Thirties, and yet despite her renewed popularity, the 'Boop-oop-a-Doop' girl has only one video to her name, a recent lacklustre TV special **THE ROMANCE OF BETTY BOOP** (CS). You're better off setting your timer

LABELS:

BBC	=	BBC
CS	=	Channel 5
CA	=	Cannon
CBS	=	CBS-Fox
CIC	=	CIC
GU	=	Guild
MGM	=	MGM-UA
MV	=	Mastervision
PL	=	Palace
SA	=	Satellite
SL	=	Select
ST	=	Stablecane
TH	=	Thorn-EMI
TP	=	Tempo Video
VC	=	Video Collection
VG	=	Video Gems
VI	=	Virgin
WB	=	Warner Bros
WD	=	Walt Disney





YOCKS ON THE BOX



DROOPY: OUT-FOXED and WAGS TO RICHES

MGM

Thoroughly imperturbable in the face of whatever iniquitous odds are stacked against him, our 'hero' suffers the slings and arrows of outrageous visual gags with stoical fortitude. But Droopy could hardly be called the 'star' of these priceless videos; he is actually quite secondary to the manic mayhem that rages about him, the perfect deadpan foil to the sublime absurdities that Tex Avery choreographs with peerless precision and imagination. 'Hello all you happy people', indeed! —DN

HEY THERE IT'S YOGI BEAR

VC

This was twinned with 'A Man Called Flintstone' in Hanna-Barbera's first full-length double feature. It took Yogi right away from the limited plot structures of the five minute TV shorts into an adventurous odyssey across the USA. A cartoon Road Movie, also a Buddy Film with Boo-Boo and a romantic Love Story with the introduction of Cindy, Yogi's girlfriend. It reaches a level of sophistication in both story and animation that up to then had been Disney's province. —EP

ROGER RAMJET

SA

That dashing atomic pill-powered hero who somehow triumphs every time is known and loved by many for his daring and brainless stunts! Sing his theme tune as he disposes of marauding beauty contest aliens or arch-villain The Brain! Note: Gary Owens, the voice of RR, is also the voice of Space Ghost, but there the similarities end. Open your home to a real American hero today! —TP

YELLOW SUBMARINE

WB

Since being dazzled at the age of seven, I've seen this at least twenty times and always been amazed. German illustrator Heinz Edelmann had his stylish, colourful creations brought to life by director Alan Lomax. The animation's ▶

for the hundred shorts the BBC will be airing.

'Arf! Arf!' Another Fleischer star, Popeye, sprang from Elzie Segar's popular newspaper strip. For a time, Popeye's crude but gutsy cartoons were a bigger draw than Mickey Mouse. But after Segar's death in 1938, the cartoons drifted further and further away from Segar's comics, overplaying the spinach eating and rarely using the insatiable burger-lover Wimpy—considered 'too psychological'. Popeye the Sailor Man's decline hit the bottom on TV where these two tapes date from, **POPEYE** (C5) and **POPEYE: DAYS GONE BY** (SL).

American comic strips and animation have been very closely related from the start. Stars of strips graduated to the screen, while animated characters lived fresh, and sometimes more inventive, adventures in comics. Artists often crossed over from one medium to the other; for instance, comics genius Jack Kirby began as an 'in-between' on 'Popeye' and 'Betty Boop' shorts, and Tex Avery's young love and ambition were to draw comic strips not animation. Early animation aped comics in the way characters were broadly drawn and in the way they moved from one expressive pose to another.

But tastes changed and by the Thirties cartoons were progressing from the rapid-fire slapstick of a 'moving comic strip' to a more illustrative approach. Disney developed more fluid life-like movement and cuter characters, akin to children's fairy tales. His triumph was **SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARVES** (WD), the first full-length animated feature, celebrating its 50th Anniversary re-release this year. As long as Disney can go on reviving classics in the cinemas, they won't rush them onto video. But more and more are appearing, with my votes going to big-eared baby elephant **DUMBO** (WD), the computerised **TRON** (WD) with designs by Moebius and the latest UK release **PINOCCHIO** (WD). Not to be outdone, the Fleischer Studio tried their own full-length efforts, **GULLIVER'S TRAVELS** and **HOPPY GOES TO TOWN** (BBC); apart from their schmalzy charm they don't really compare. But Disney hasn't been the only one to recognise a good book. Halas and Batchelor made Orwell's **ANIMAL FARM** (BBC) into a fine first British animated feature. Brush up on your 'Classics Animated' with the worthy **WATERSHIP DOWN** (CA), the old-style **SECRET OF NIMH** (WB) and Chuck Jones' witty version of **THE**

PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH (MGM).

The other studios knew they could never achieve Disney's quality, so they churned out quantity instead. Yards of cut-price **TERRYTOONS** (MGM) turn up on a dozen volumes of visual wallpaper, though I do have a soft spot for that bumbling nasal elephant Sidney. Terrytoons' most successful character was Mighty Mouse, who bursts into an operatic aria while punching out his enemies in **THE GREAT SPACE CHASE** (VC) and four other **MIGHTY MOUSE** (C5) compilations. Walter Lantz's frenetic **WOODY WOODPECKER** (CIC) was inspired by a persistent woodpecker that disrupted his honeymoon; in fact, his wife's speeded-up vocals provided Woody's piercing jabber for many years. But these four videos show that Woody hasn't worn as well as other classic characters.

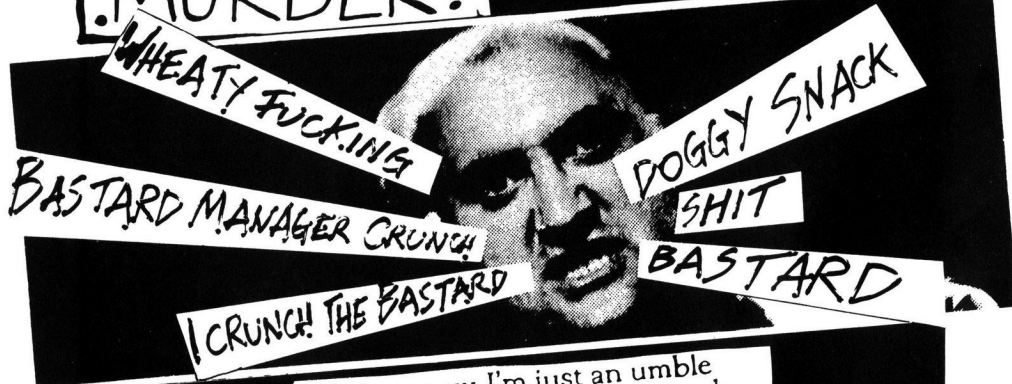
By the early Forties, a revolution was brewing among an alert younger generation of animators, impatient with the predominant Disney-inspired gingerbread gentility, with little life-like actors in a children's storybook world. Among the rebels who quit the Disney Studios were Walt Kelly, who completely overturned their simplistic animal stereotypes in his newspaper strip 'Pogo', and Steve Bosustow, whose modern approach to cartoons at MPA set a whole new standard, for example on **MR MAGOO** (ST).

Others got their breaks at Warner Brothers, where as directors Tex Avery, Chuck Jones and the gang radicalised the 'Looney Tunes' and 'Merrie Melodies' series into altogether wackier brasher territory. Tex Avery in particular injected a frantic pacing, stretching gags to impossible lengths and giving characters more adult tensions. He said, 'I tried to do something I thought I would laugh at, if I were to see it on the screen, rather than worry about "Will a ten-year-old laugh at this?" That's why I never made any fuzzy bunny things.' Instead he reversed all the Disney clichés. His rabbit wasn't fluffy and feeble; his rabbit stared down the muzzle of Elmer Fudd's shotgun and twanged in 'poifect' Brooklynesse, 'What's up, Doc?'. Bugs Bunny was first defined in Avery's 1940 film 'A Wild Hare', one of seven Forties Bugs classics on **WABBIT TWOBLE** (MGM), with more on **HOLD THE LION PLEASE** (MGM) and **THE BEST OF BUGS BUNNY AND FRIENDS** (MGM).

Avery also directed Daffy Duck's wise-quacking



GEOFFREY THE TUBE TRAIN AND THE FAT COMEDIAN



Being as ow I'm just an umble
stand up comedian I ain't much
good wif the written word like.
Not like them writin' toffs, yer
Doris Lessins or A.N. Wilsons.

So Alexei Sayle has teamed up with ace artist Oscar Zarate (fresh from creating the cartoon-strip *Othello*) and Dr Faustus! for hack playwrights William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe) to bring to life a visual and verbal knee-in-the-groin of a graphic novel. *Geoffrey the Tube Train and the Fat Comedian* is not for the faint of spirit - it is a terminally funny and provocative story, and a blood-red caricature of 1980s London life.

300x220mm 64 pages of full colour cartoon strips paperback £4.95 available now

methuen
PAPERBACKS



debut in 'Porky's Duck Hunt', among the billing on **DAFFY DUCK: THE NUTTINESS CONTINUES** (WB). This is one of nine **GOLDEN JUBILEE 24 KARAT COLLECTIONS** (WB), each starring a different celebrity, in which those obsessional aggressors Sylvester, Yosemite Sam and Wile E. Coyote always lose out against the cool intelligence of Tweety and Road Runner or the utter lunacy of Bugs and Daffy. The whole gang show up on nineteen—don't watch them all at once or you'll go blind!—**LOONEY TUNES VIDEO SHOWS** (WB); their menus are variable but highlights are Chuck Jones masterpieces like Daffy's nightmare 'Duck Amuck' Vol.12 and his Buck Rogers' send-up 'Duck Dodgers In The Twenty Fourth and a Half Century' Vol.13, and his Bugs Bunny meets Fantasia and Wagner 'What's Opera Doc?' Vol.15. But you can see all three of these along with more non-stop Jones in **THE BUGS BUNNY AND ROAD RUNNER MOVIE** (WB).

Tex Avery meantime had moved to MGM where he made his zaniest ever cartoons, sixty-five certifiable insanities. Far too few of them are on video but here's where to find them. **MGM CARTOON FESTIVAL Vol.1 and Vol.2** (MGM) feature: 'Screwball Squirrel', 'Little Rural Riding Hood' and 'King Size Canary' on Vol.1; 'Screwly Truant', 'Wild and Woolfy' with Droopy, 'Magical Maestro' and 'Lucky Ducky' on Vol.2; and **MGM CARTOON MAGIC Vol.3 and Vol.4** (MGM) 'Slap-Happy Lion' on Vol.3; and 'Happy Go Nutty' and 'Little Tinker', a savage Sinatra parody, on Vol. 4.

In 1943 Avery unleashed that poker-faced basket hound Droopy in 'Dumb-Hounded', one of fourteen Avery nuggets on two indispensable cassettes, **WAGS TO RICHES** (MGM) and **OUT-FOXED** (MGM). Now how about all those other Avery faves—not to say raves—not yet on tape?

Away from Avery's 'B' unit, MGM's big box-office double act through the Forties and into the Fifties were Tom and Jerry, directed mainly by Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera. You cannot go wrong with most of their tapes, each with eight episodes of cat'n'mouse mayhem. The only ones to actively avoid are Chuck Jones' out-of-tune Sixties efforts. You get top quality and value on the first two **TOM AND JERRY CARTOON FESTIVALS** (MGM), with classics like 'Cat Concerto' and 'The Night Before Christmas'.

By 1957 MGM's animation department had shut up shop. The future was television, so Hanna & Barbera started their own studio to scale Holly-

wood animation down to the small screen. TV's tight budgets and schedules forced them to economise on actual animation but they offset the limited movements with snappy dialogue and stories. The following year, **HUCKLEBERRY HOUND** (VC) was the first in a string of hit shows, that included co-star Yogi Bear. Huck is back in eight adventures and so is Yogi in H&B's first full-length feature **HEY THERE IT'S YOGI BEAR** (VC).

'Yabba-Dabba-DOOO!' **THE FLINTSTONES** (VC) made TV history in 1960 as the first ever animated prime time sitcom; the modern stone-age family were actually patterned after 'The Honeymooners' shows with Jackie Gleason. You can hit the town of Bedrock in three double-bills, but so far their space-age neighbours, 'The Jetsons', are not available here. Picking up the smooth talk of Phil Silvers' 'Bilko', **TOP CAT** (VC) and his gang of Broadway alley cats always outsmarted gullible Officer Dibble. In Britain the show had to be renamed 'Boss Cat', all because the BBC were paranoid about advertising the cat food. T.C. and his pals really do stand up to repeated viewing, as do many of Hanna-Barbera's 30-year pantheon, from 'Up and at 'em!' **ATOM ANT** (VC & GU) and 'Shhhhh!' **SECRET SQUIRREL** (VC) to **SPA-A-A-ACE GHO-O-O-OSTI** and **DASTARDLY & MUTTLEY** (VC)—'Drat, Drat, and Triple Drat!'—not forgetting the psychedelic **BANANA SPLITS** (VC). Only one glaring omission here—there's no sign of the thrill-a-minute Jonny Quest'.

Whatever TV cartoons lack in lush full animation, the best more than make up for it by their sharp style and witty writing. Jay Ward's cult Sixties series 'Rocky and Bullwinkle' has about the most absurdly inspired scripts ever on a TV cartoon, as the town of Frostbite Falls, Minnesota falls foul of man-eating Potzlvania creepers and other schemes of Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale. Only snatches of it have surfaced on morning TV and none of the shows are out here yet on tape. At least you can get that sophisticated feline **THE PINK PANTHER** (MGM) on four different videos and that all-round good guy **ROGER RAMJET** (SA) on two. As for British TV series, you can't get much more eccentric than John Ryan's buccaneering **CAPTAIN PUGWASH** (TV) or much more barmy than Cosgrove-Hall's sardonic **DANGER MOUSE** (VC).

So many successful comics character have crossed over into animation, you'd think more

YOCKS ON THE BOX CONTINUED

full of experiments. Lautrec meets Psychedelia in the painterly rotoscoping for 'Lucy in the Sky'; the extraordinary 'Eleanor Rigby' sequence was made from tinted film loops. Maybe a cliché today, at the time an innovation. Moves me to tears every time—a joy from start to finish.—EP

PINK PANTHER

MGM

Originally conceived only as a good gag for the opening titles of Blake Edwards' Inspector Clouseau films, his Rinkydinkness got his own cartoon show soon after. There has never been an equal to the PP Show for surreal wit, style, gorgeous animation and of course Henry Mancini's music, in one show. The Inspector Clouseau cartoons are often far funnier than the films they came from too. Truly classic stuff! Recommended for anyone!

—TP

READ AND EVERGREEN

Why, if you do the voices yourself, some of these cartoon comic books can be as good as the real thing!



1 BULLWINKLE AND ROCKY

Star

Yes, mouse fans, here's a comic that's as splendid as the cartoons, with our heroes, their villains and those silly stories. The most fun you can have without growing antlers!

2 DONALD DUCK

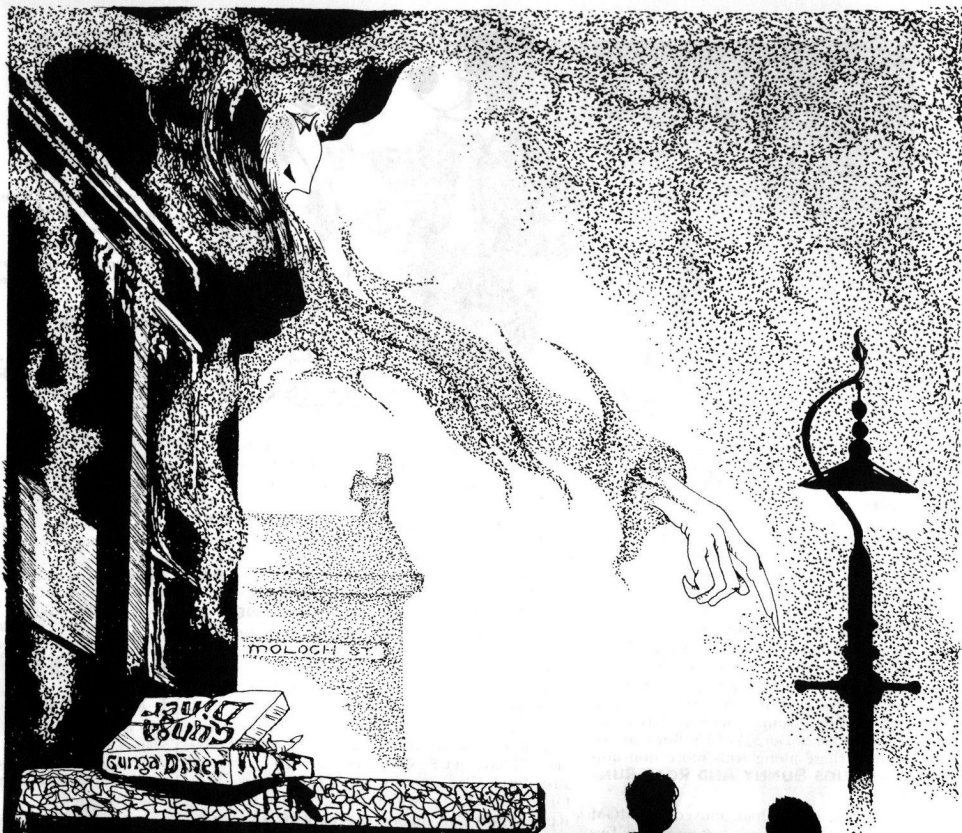
Quack

See the world with Donald and his Uncle Scrooge in some truly timeless yarns. The best, by Carl Barks, are far more imaginative than any of the cartoons.

3 SPACE GHOST

Cosmo

Fighting evil all over the galaxy with his powers of invisibility and his teen friends Jan and Jayce and Bleep the space monkey. Designed for ▶



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CHAPTER ONE

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would turn out successfully. Superman's first cartoons, produced in the early Forties by the Fleischer and Famous Studios, have never been topped since for quality and drama but are not on video. Frankly, I'd steer clear of most animated DC and Marvel superheroes—they're lame, even when Marvel's Sixties TV series recycled actual stories and artwork from the four-colour pages. Hergé had little to do with the adaptations of his **HERGÉ'S ADVENTURES OF TINTIN**, but for all their faults, they're carried by the stirring soundtrack on **THE BLACK ISLAND**, **THE CRAB WITH THE GOLDEN CLAWS (VC)**, **THE SHOOTING STAR**, **THE SECRET OF THE UNICORN** and **RED RACKHAM'S TREASURE (VI)**. You can't go far wrong with those Gallic charmers **ASTERIX & OBELIX (VC)**, or with Schulz's **SNOOPY** and **CHARLIE BROWN (CS)** or **RUPERT THE BEAR (TP)** in three videos taken from Alfred Bestall's illustrations and the luscious **RUPERT AND THE FROG SONG (VI)**, **GARFIELD (CS)** and **THE SMURFS (VC)** should please their legion of fans.

Up from the underground, Robert Crumb's sex maniac **FRTZ THE CAT (TH)** became the first X-rated animated star in Ralph Bakshi's 1972 film. It's not true to the comic though, and Crumb detested it, suing to have his name removed from the credits. He got his revenge by killing off his character in a new strip, but it didn't prevent a shoddy disastrous sequel, **THE NINE LIVES OF FRTZ THE CAT (CS)**. It's always preferable to stick close to the original, as in **THE SNOWMAN (PL)** and **WHEN THE WIND BLOWS (CBS)** from Raymond Briggs' books. Winsor McCay still represents the ideal combination, where one artist can make both

the comic and the cartoon. In the case of Japan's 'God of Comics' Osamu Tezuka, he has produced both *manga* stars and their TV adaptations with phenomenal success, like his jungle fable **KIMBA THE WHITE LION (EM)** out on two videos. On **SPACE CRUISER YAMATO (VC)** Reiji Matsumoto, creator of the comics series, also helped design and direct this exotic animated star wars.

For those of you who still watch the little dot disappearing into the middle of the screen, there's a rose-coloured fluorescent glow on the cathode-ray tube horizon. All new work and not yet available on video. Latest yocks on the box include the return of 'Popeye' with a son, in the tiresome tradition of the diminutive sidekick, and 'Mighty Mouse' rebounds courtesy of Ralph Bakshi. The best new show is 'Duck Tales' starring Donald's zillionaire Uncle Scrooge and his three nephews, great Disney animation and stories fresh out of Carl Barks' comics. Among the feature films to come are two stars of the silents, 'Felix the Cat' and 'Little Nemo'. And once the Saturday morning show 'Pee-wee's Playhouse' hits our screens, we'll be able to superabsorb not only its wackola new designs by Bristol's Aardman Animations—the guys behind Peter Gabriel's 'Sledgehammer' video—and Gary 'Jimbo' Panter but also some surreal shorts from animation's pre-History.

From antique antics to the next TV hits, our Guide has come full circle. Armed with this Cartoonal Knowledge, now it's your turn to become a Re-Animator. In the words of Pee-wee Herman's King Cartoon:

'Let the cart-ooooooooons COMMENCE!'

—Paul Gravett

CONTINUED

TV by Alex Toth, one-shot comic by Steve Rude.

4 MICKEY MOUSE

Gladstone

Mickey's no dreary bourgeois in these action adventures from Floyd Gottfredson's Thirties' newspaper serials. Ghosts, gangsters, pirates, mad scientists, Mickey takes on the bad guys. Yay!



5 JONNY QUEST

Comico

Re-live three classic TV episodes, adapted by the show's designer Doug Wildey, and find out more about the Quests, Race Bannon, Hadji, even Bandit the dog, in brand new exploits.

6 ASTROBOY

New

Glossy expanded update of Tezuka's robot boy wonder, built by a scientist to duplicate his dead son. No competition for the Japanese originals, but attractive substitute.

7 MIGHTY MOUSE

Spotlight

Mix Superman and Mickey Mouse and what do you get? The Mouse of Tomorrow defending Terrytown from multiple menaces and your chance to sing opera and punch cats at the same time.

8 BETTY BOOP

Blackthorne

Practise your 'Boop Boop A Doop's as the cartoon screen goddess flashes her false eyelashes in garter'n'gag strips that satirise Thirties' Hollywood.

9 FLINTSTONES

Blackthorne

Go cross-eyed as Fred and Barney go 3-D. Special FX don't make the stories any more than average, but at least you get the genuine article and not some 'Flintstone Kids' candy floss.

10 MADBALLS

Star

OK, so it's another toy commercial, but these bulging eyeballs have a certain endearing grossness to them, the TV equivalents of Daddy Roth's Weird-Os and Basil Wolverton's uglies. O

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Most of the above are available from Forbidden Planet 2, St Giles High Street, London WC2, or other regional specialist shops.

"Bryan Talbot's LUTHER ARKWRIGHT, in both content and technique, has always been a good decade ahead of its time. Today in a marketplace that has finally caught up, it should find the audience it so richly deserves."

Alan Moore

"Bryan Talbot's stuff appeals to me a lot - both the drawing and the text. It's all nicely organised. Good classical music to me. Not many people do this technique and Talbot does it better than most. It's stimulating and fresh and better than most of the comic stuff done either here, France or America."

Michael Moorcock



Started almost 10 years ago in a British underground magazine, Bryan Talbot's **Luther Arkwright** is the only adult graphic novel to be published in Britain to date. Constructed in three parts, the second volume is due soon, and work is well underway on the third. In the meantime the whole story will be published in American comics format.

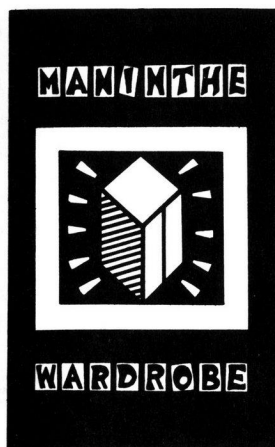
The style of artwork is based on Victorian etchings, and will be familiar to those who've seen Talbot's work on **Nemesis**, a strip he inherited due to his work on **Arkwright**. The covers will also be special, looking unlike anything else currently available, with each being an illustration within a pseudo-Victorian frame, and with a strong use of British imagery.

To: Chris Bell, Valkyrie Press,
P.O. Box 386, Bristol BS99 7WL, England.
I wish to order Issue #1 of *Luther Arkwright*:
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air mail: 60p UK / \$2.75 US / \$3.35 Can
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upon returning home after a difficult and most delicate operation

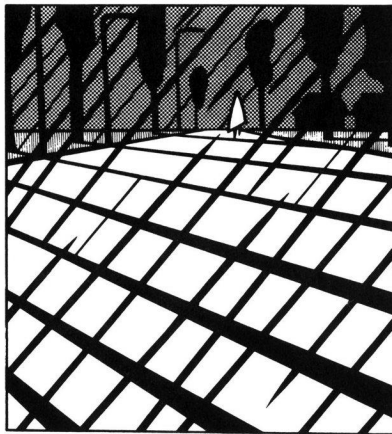
I found I could no longer face day to day life



with each day that passed I became more and more withdrawn

my body and mind were full of feelings I can't describe to this day

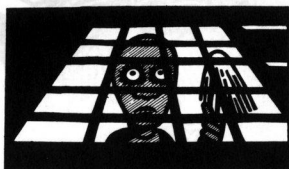
and I indulged in all manner of pursuit to try and ease my dilemma



I would drive all over town with the radio on full blast

or take long walks in the rain

but still I remained in lonely torment



I even took a job



but that didn't help



Eventually I could only find peace
of mind huddled in the quiet
darkness of my wardrobe



I thought of my past life, of my past loves



And of my father he never really approved of me



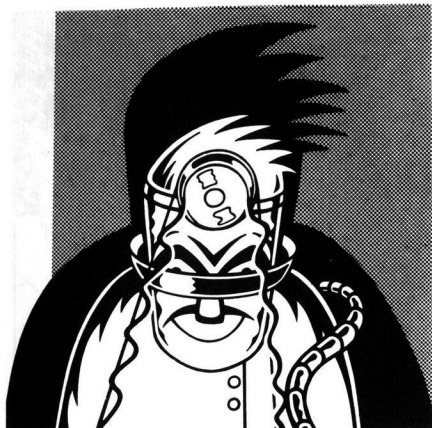
In the wardrobe my
thoughts whirled



and time passed



my friends grew
concerned



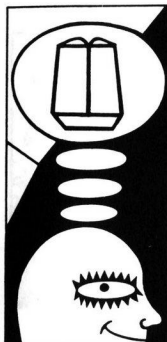
And advised me to seek medical help, after a somewhat extensive examination



A doctor assured my friends I was fine



and settling down well in my new home. I grew to love my wardrobe



I had never felt so happy



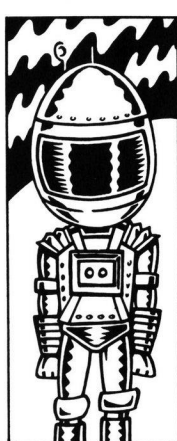
On the fifty third day of my new life I discovered some



clothes I had left in my wardrobe



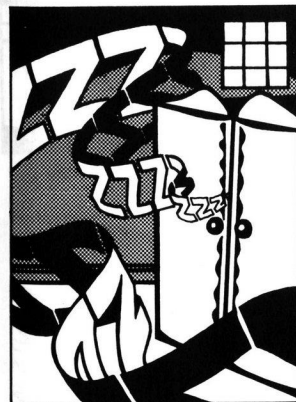
For days I dressed up in all manner of costume



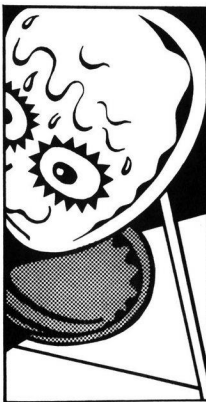
Dancing and frolicking in the dim half light



cast by the wardrobe's interior bulb



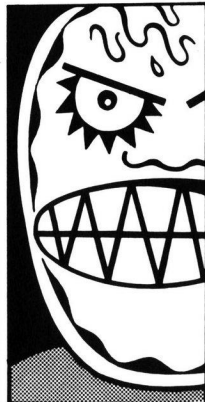
Until I fell exhausted into a deep sleep



when I awoke I felt strange



A thin sliver of light I hadn't noticed before, penetrated the thick blackness around me.



I felt indignant and betrayed



I decided after many days of inner turmoil, to seek new accomodation.



It was a sad day as I slowly pushed open the wardrobe door



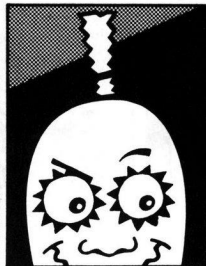
and, peered into a room I hadn't seen for



months. I noticed a sideboard, its polished teak finish, and well oiled hinges sent a shiver down my spine



I felt weak and utterly helpless



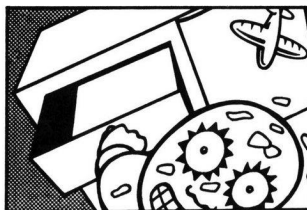
in the face of such ferocious temptation.



Suddenly I leapt across the living room.



Neatly sidestepping a potted palm,



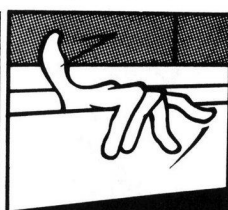
I yanked open the top right hand sideboard drawer,



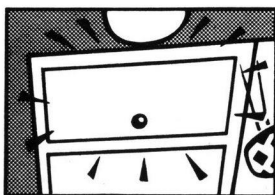
and crammed myself inside



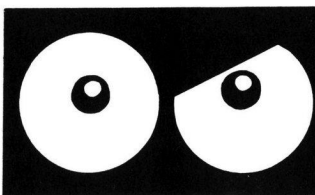
I'm not a small man at the best of times.



But I managed to squeeze in



I was safe again



I spent however only three short days in the sideboard



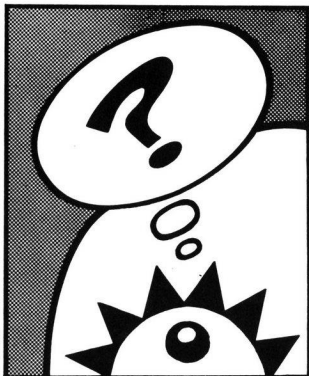
awakening one cold November morning to find myself transported to



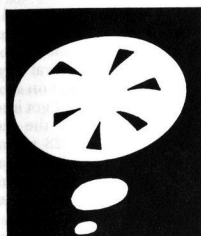
The loft, where I was trapped firmly inside



an old cardboard box



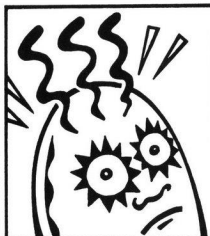
I was perplexed at this seemingly magical relocation of my person.



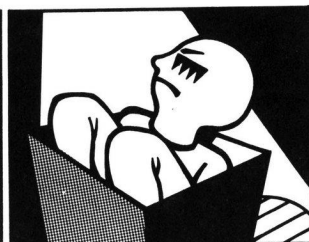
I didn't have long to wait though before I realised what was going on



Some time later, I experienced



a mild dizziness



and blacked out



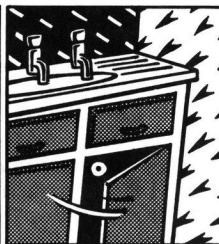
regaining consciousness in a totally different part of the house



my actions were no longer my own



I was continually moving



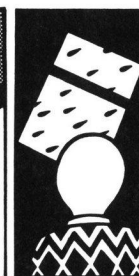
with no power over my body



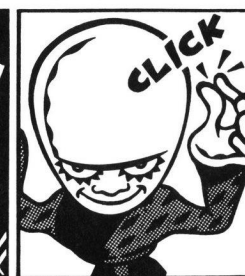
within a week I'd been through



every piece of furniture in the house



and twice up into the attic

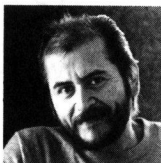


I resigned myself to a life of ever-increasing movement, and now all that can be seen of me



is a silver flash of particles as I move at sublight speeds randomly around the house.

Seriously WICCY



*The tunnel vision of Alexei Sayle
and Oscar Zarate.*

Interview by Paul Gravett

OSCAR: It was my idea to contact Alexei three years ago, after I read his *Train To Hell*. I thought what he was saying in his work had to do with what I'm saying in my pictures. The starting point was to do something on London today. We'd both moved to London sixteen years ago, me from Argentina, him from Liverpool.

ALEXEI: Actually, Oscar wrote to me through the personal columns in *Time Out*—'Butch Argie seeks partner!' The only reason I did this book is to heal the rifts between our two countries. I suppose

when Oscar came to me, I thought 'This is going to be a breeze, just do a few words, let him do all the work and get half the money'. But I found it intensely difficult, more than a normal book. My inclination when writing comedy is the more jokes the better. Writing comics, I had constantly to take jokes out to let the pictures speak. Some of the stuff I couldn't fit in went into the footnotes. I never said what Oscar's pictures should be, though.

O: That's what made it interesting. Once we had agreed to work together, he had his own platform to work from, the words, and I had mine, the pictures. Yet we went through six different scripts!

A: We did talk, but my method is to put it down on paper and work and re-work that. In fact, I wasn't sure how it would end until the last draft. It evolved in an enormously painful way, like writing captions for Turner paintings.

O: I had wanted to use more speech balloons, but Alexei found it too difficult. We decided not to use them, so it became more like a prose story. Words and pictures play off each other. The illustrations aren't just an extension to the text, there are discussions and tensions between the two.

PAUL: It's clearly very autobiographical.

A: I don't think I look like that fat clown! I'm no

longer a comedian and I'm less fat than I was, I've lost a couple of stone since we started the book! I've never been able to write books about anybody else but me in the first person. The central thrust of half the story is an interesting sidelight on showbiz. At the time when I wrote this book, I got into a really painful legal situation, probably the most traumatic event in my career. I was 28 when I signed a contract with this manager, where I gave him half my income for the next three hundred years. It's something that happens to a lot of young artists. I was with him for three years and then he moved to America, still insisting that he could manage my career from there. So I broke the contract and he took all my money. I was feeling kind of hysterical about my future. In some interviews I was doing then, I wanted to refer to this geezer as a cunt and I thought they might print it, a sort of petty revenge. But I was worried that he might sue me further, so I had to check with my highly-paid lawyers, who said, you can call anybody any derogatory name you want, because in law it's only 'common' or 'low' abuse. If you call somebody a swindler, a liar or a cheat, they can sue you, but if you say they're a dickhead, there's absolutely nothing they can do about it. So I try to call somebody a dickhead at least once a day! That was the starting point, this legal tangle I was in. When you're riding high and then something like that happens, it's good for you, as long as you can come back, put it in a book and make more money out of it.

P: The other half of the story is a book within a book, a kind of twisted version of *Thomas the Tank Engine*.

A: Yes, my first book, *Train To Hell*, had started as a parody of a travel book, so with this book I wanted to do something based on children's books. I love the drawings in *Thomas the Tank Engine*, that portray this idyllic utopian view of England. In the story, I decide to write a cutesy-mutesy children's book which can be published when my legal troubles are over. At first all goes well with my book about Geoffrey the Tube Train and his life on the Southern line. But gradually my life and the children's book start to blend together, and gruesome murders start to occur on the tube line. Having nothing better to do, I set out to ride the rails and track down the murderer. I like the fact

HIGH TEA at the sumptuous Hotel Russell and the garcon wheels in a trolley laden with tempting treats. Pinkies at the ready, Alexei manoeuvres for the apricot Danish, while Oscar Zarate and I corner the scones and cream. From deep within his plush armchair, Alexei buttonholes Oscar about their first comic book together.

that Geoffrey the Tube Train is completely round the bend. That came from when I'm riding on the tube, sometimes I do just want to strangle people. You're confronted by London humanity in all its awfulness. They seem much worse on the tube than on the bus.

O: The children's book sections were the only time Alexei intervened visually. He thought they were too gloomy and should be a lot lighter.

P: Some people have found the book a bleak and pessimistic.

O: The book is a serious book, tackling serious issues which to me are not right. I didn't want to make a 'comic' book, a 'cartoon' book. But in this format, people get uneasy about it. They would prefer to see something else. But the book's not fatalistic, it's pointing out what is going on. It's more like a mental state than any specific topical satire.

A: I've always felt there was nothing else you could deal with but the political situation. That's not to say you write Strike films, whatever, but at bottom, that's what you begin with to generate a book. Writing a comedy of social manners seems like a waste of time. The interviewer on Breakfast TV was saying, 'There's some really funny bits in this book' and thumbing through he couldn't find anything! It's not that kind of book. It's quite grotesque. It's partly about the retrenchment of liberal cabaret driven into the foothills of North London and the Thatcher Big Bang years.

O: And it's about the presence of the US in Britain. Ten years ago kids were eating fish and chips not MacDonalds.

A: Well we have Wimpy's, but you couldn't get much further away from an American hamburger than a Wimpy. Quintessentially English wartime rations. And their strange circular sausage, the Bender. In the *Sunday Mirror* the cartoonist Michael Heath reviewed the book and he didn't like it. I can't even get a good review in my own paper! He said it paints a bleak picture and doesn't offer any solutions. But in a sense it does offer a solution. It says you have to develop a personal morality to stick to. I examine various theoretical utopias like Widdicombe-under-Moped, like being a showbiz personality, advertising and so on, and London itself, and I turn my back on them. I reject their allure, their seduction. I don't offer a kind of brainless nostalgia, wingeing on about a Britain that's not there anymore. That's what Widdicombe-under-Moped is all about. You should find what's vital now and establish your personal morality, what you will and won't do.

P: What's your relationship to show business now?

A: It's OK. I just don't put ultimate trust in anybody in the biz. Generally I mix much less with other performers. What fucks a lot of performers up is that their friends in the business are trying to

put them over. During my court case, people became ambivalent, they'd be friendly to me and friendly to my manager, to keep their options open. I got fed up with the limitations of stand-up comedy. If the audience has seen you on the telly, they've merely come to worship at the shrine of their TV hero. It's just idolatry, so there's a lack of Brechtian alienation, any critical judgement. I had a very distanced relationship with my audience. I often didn't feel any affection for them, because I believe that an audience should be critical. The best way a comedian can alienate his audience is by not being funny, but that's a terrible betrayal of the artform. I got closer to having an alienated critical audience who were still pissing themselves, rolling in the aisles, than anyone's ever got before. But as a comic you've got a lot of tricks, funny faces and little jumps and you can't stop yourself. You say, 'Tonight, I'm not going to pull a funny face.' Then you don't get a laugh for ten seconds

'There's a persistent image of me being a cross between Bernard Manning and Johnny Rotten.'



THROUGH THAT HOT NIGHT I REALIZED I NEEDED TO DO SOMETHING MORE WITH MY TIME, TO FILL UP THE EMPTY DAYS AND NIGHTS.

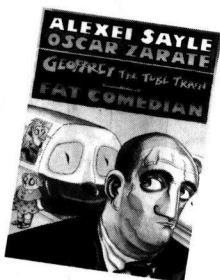
so you pull one out.

P: And don't the public expect a comedian to always be on?

A: I think that's just an excuse for comedians who want to be on. They say 'People expect it of me' but I don't think they do really. A lot of comics, old-fashioned ones and some of the new ones, don't exist unless they're telling a joke, it's what they love. The only time they're alive is when they've got an admiring audience.

P: What do you like about writing your column in the *Sunday Mirror*?

A: I feel a lot of affection between me and the readers. I get a lot of mail and we're enjoying a private joke, a certain intimacy in this tabloid newspaper. It's completely barmy, it's what people send in to me. And although the book is edgier, there will be a certain community with the reader. It's in my writing in books and films that I'm developing, becoming more complex, both in my relationship with the audience and in what I'm writing about. Getting my ideas across has been a perennial problem. There's a persistent image of me being a cross between Bernard Manning and Johnny Rotten, which shows poor attention to my work. A lot of it has to do with class, ever since I started. Also the fact that I'm uncompromising in what I do.



Geoffrey the Tube Train is published by Methuen at £4.95.



There are two peasant farmers tending the crops in a field near PRIMITIF'S village.
PRIMITIF is approaching and decides to mock these men—



"What do I Need with Grain?"
he Boasts. "MEAT is all I eat!"
— "BUT without GRAIN—"

"You would have No
BREAD to eat with your
meat," the Farmers Reply.

"BAH!" cries the Hunter Scornfully.
"Agree with me, or—" Finding
that he is being ignored—

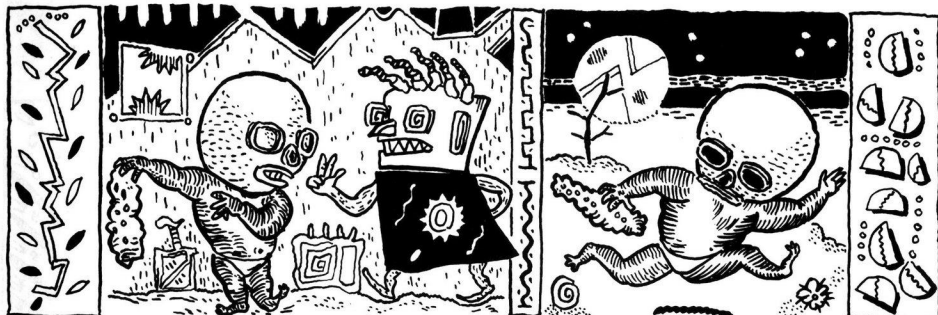


He quickly tramples down most
of the crop in a Blind Rage.

Far from displaying anger themselves, the Farmers simply
hand a large clump of Earth to PRIMITIF. It is filled with
seeds. "Go forth and learn!" — they suggest to him.



PRIMITIF isn't too impressed by this - and tries to throw away the Lump of earth. But it will not Leave his Hand; try as he might, he cannot release it!



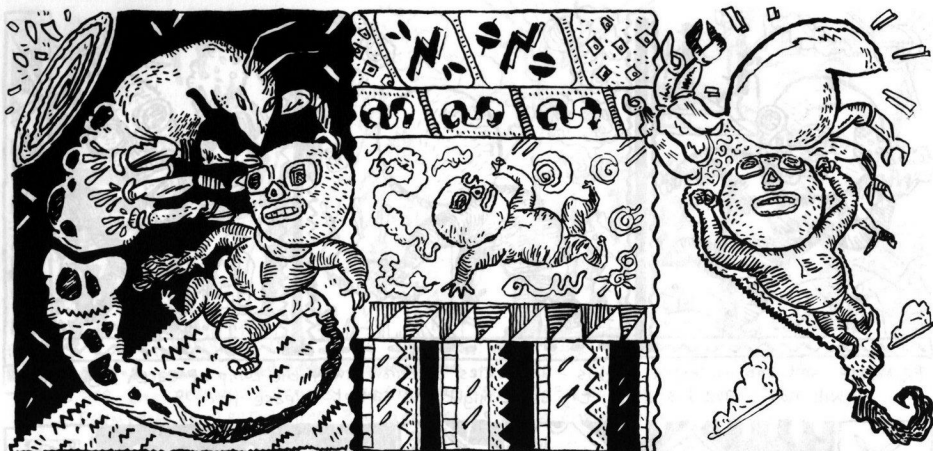
"What's going on Here?" He shortly consults the Medicine Man. "Is this a WARNING of some kind?"
 -"Yes, and to remove the chunk you must wash your hand Three Times in the waters of the Magic Whirlpool," he's told.



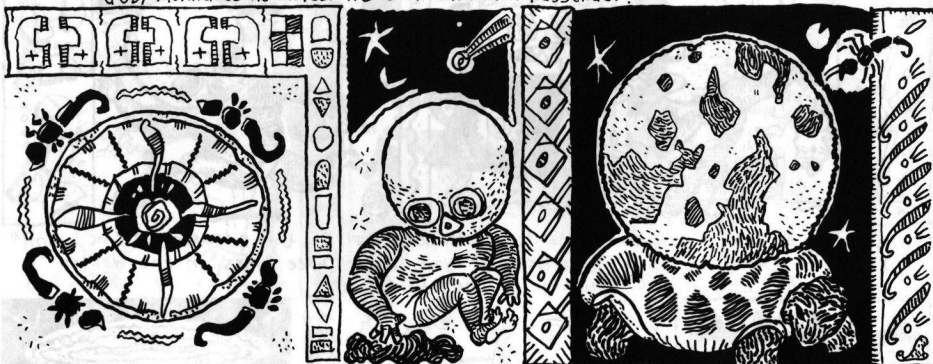
Down by the water's edge, PRIMITIF bathes his hands

On the third time, the water clouds over and Splash! A huge Fearsome God leaps out From the Pool!

"You're No Water God!" cries PRIMITIF. "No, I'm DELATERRE!" replies the other.



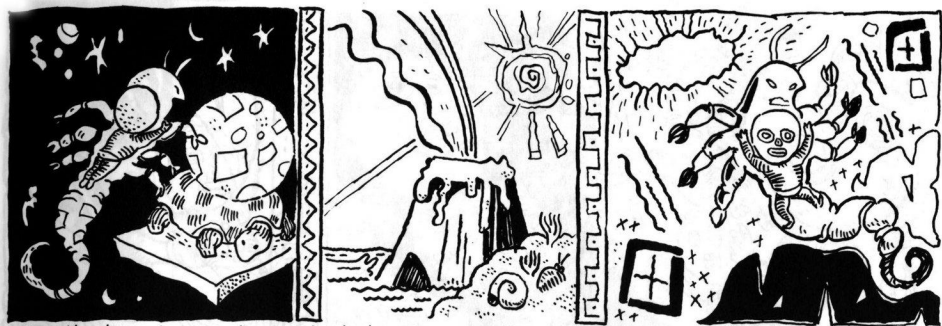
DELATERRÉ is equipped with many arms. "You must Now wear Me, as A Second SKIN!" he tells PRIMITIF, grabbing him with SEVERAL PINNERS. "YOU WARRIOR, HUNTER, CARNIVORE!" And at once, PRIMITIF is inside the GOD, moving as he moves. He is an UNWILLING passenger!



Off they go! "I'll show you the Top and Bottom of the Earth," announces DELATERRE. "Why has he chosen me?" wonders PRIMITIF. They are high in the sky, looking down at the world. Sure enough, ERVE to the Legend PRIMITIF knows, it is perched on top of a Turtle's Back.



"I'm still holding this chunk of seeded earth," says PRIMITIF, quite astonished. "Yes, and Now we must cultivate it further," he's told. DELATERRE sweeps through the stars with a scythe and gathers a Harvest. From this they plant one star as a seed.



Now they're RETURNING to earth at headlong speed. Entering through the mouth of a volcano they come to the caves beneath the ground.

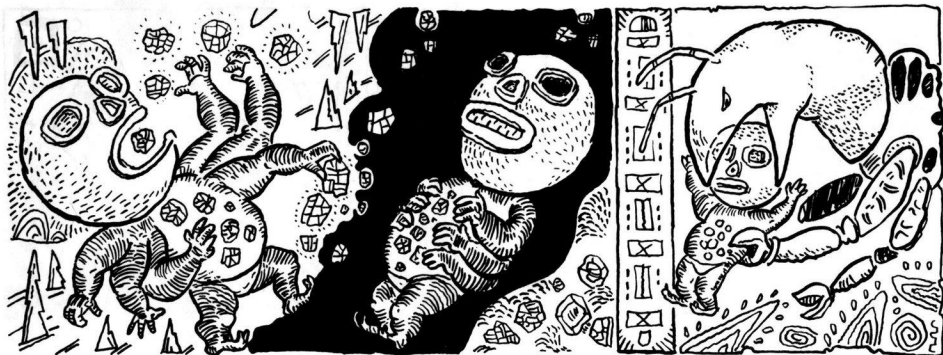


In this New Land there dwell many little moles, each of whom is digging for jewels and precious stones Buried in the soil.

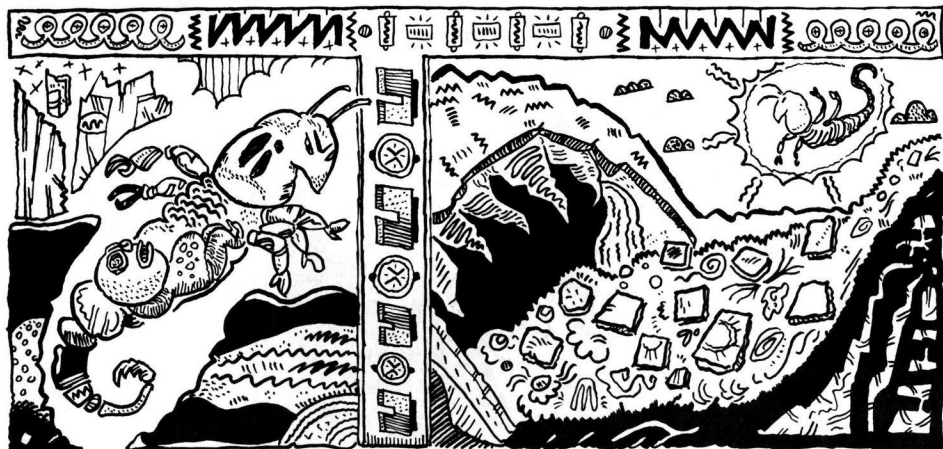


"Now I will release you for a while," says DELATERRE, "And see what you make of this land."

PRIMITIF yells at the top of his voice — He has grown many arms, like his mentor! And in each arm, a crude pickaxe. He commences to DIG and greedily helps himself to jewels.



He starts by simply pocketing a few precious Jewels—but this leads to his eating them, by the dozen! After he's stuffed himself, DELATERRE brings PRIMITIF back inside the 2ND SKIN.



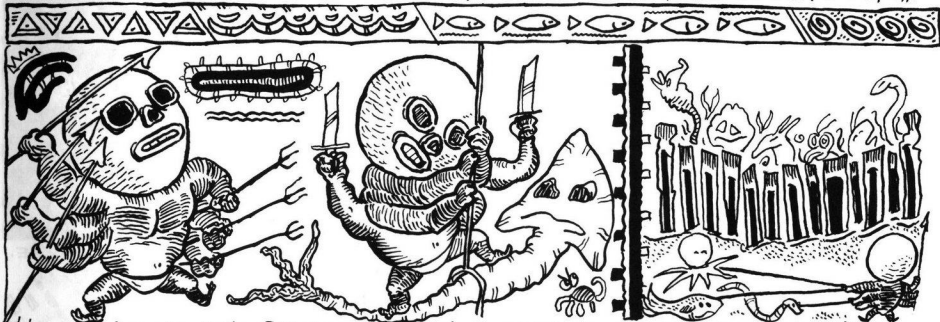
PRIMITIF seems very pleased with himself, as they return to the surface. But DELATERRE'S so disgusted he decides to fill the caves with rubble, rather than let PRIMITIF back there again!



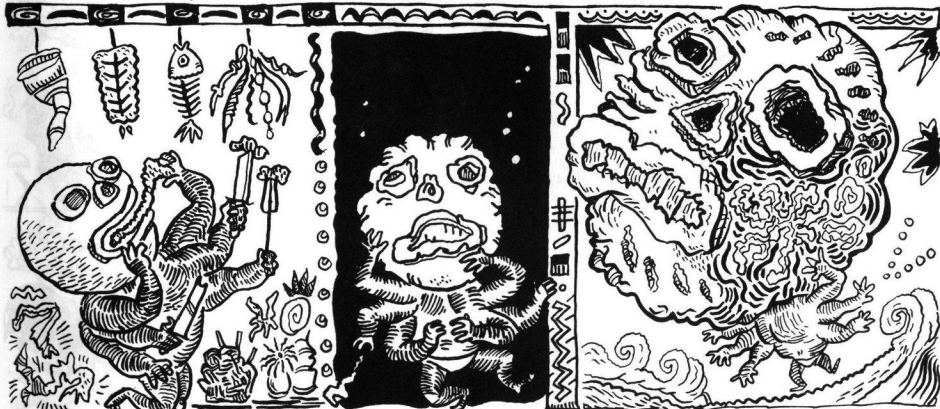
PRIMITIF examines the Jewels he stole—they turn into ashes before his eyes. But the God has saved one, to be planted in the clump of earth. "Why do you do this?" shouts the Hunter from within. "Silence!" he is warned. "Time to visit the sea land!" And they plunge into the ocean below.



PRIMITIF is amazed at the sights. ONCE again, DELATERRE sees fit to set him free for a spell.

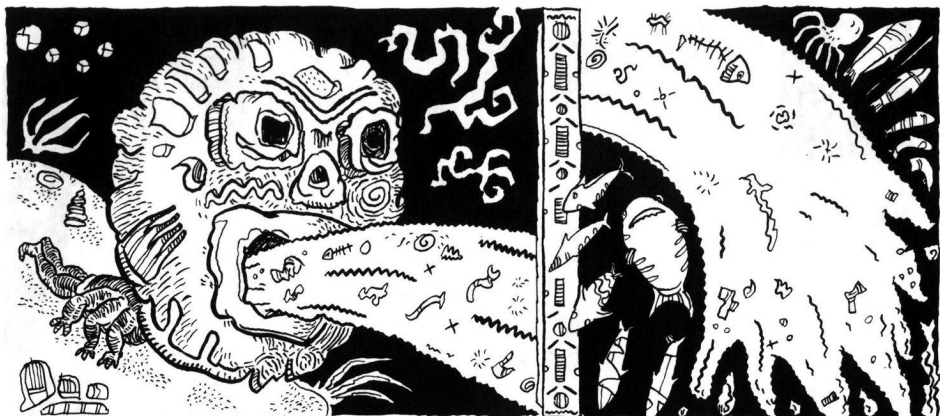


There are Animals of the Sea abounding, which PRIMITIF hunts down and imprisons in fences. He holds a spear and knife in every hand.



Now he's eating their flesh, along with seaweed and other foods.

BUT to his horror, his head is beginning to grow—it becomes huge and grotesque, and when it swells up to full size—



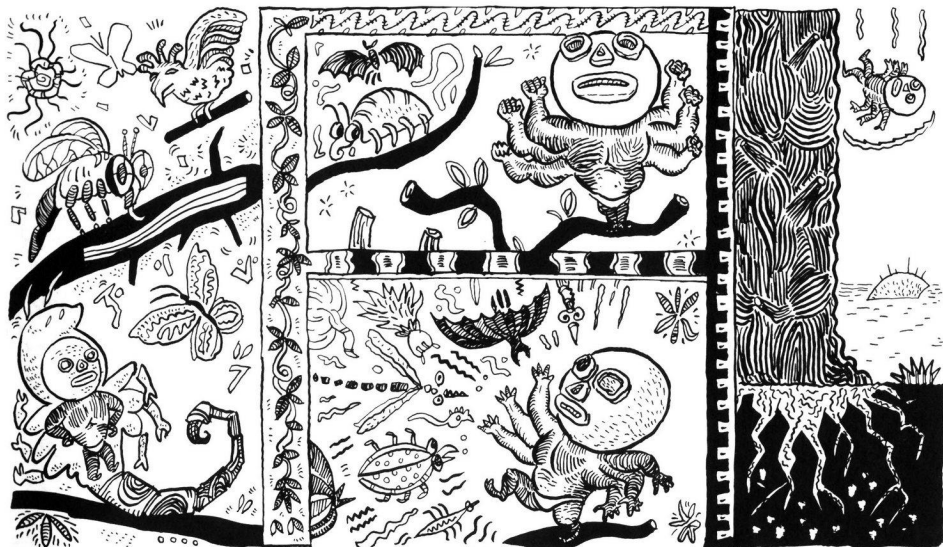
He suddenly Vomits forth into the ocean Bed, The Voiding is poisonous and kills all the Remaining sea Life.



As his head Returns to normal size—he's swiftly Removed from the Sea Lands by DELATERRE. A seaweed spore is planted. "And where are we going Now?" asks the hunter faintly.



For Answer, he's flown away to the Forest Treetops, which reach many miles up into the sky. Among the Dwellers here are winged Bats and flying Insects.



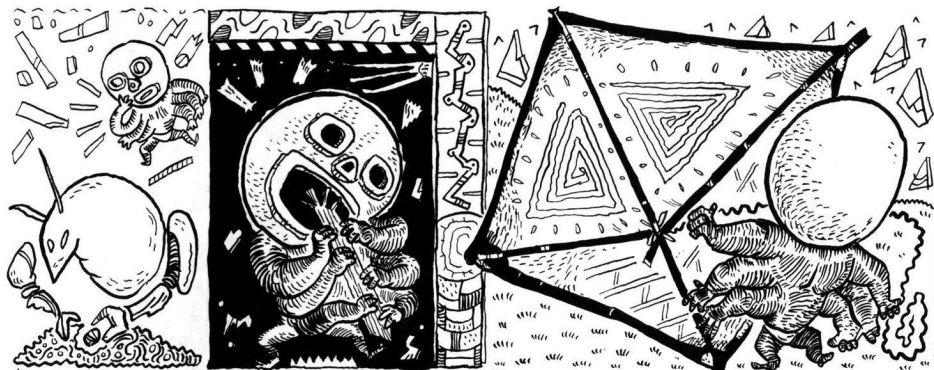
"Release ME Again!" cries PRIMITIF. "Let me Loose!" ONCE he's free, he finds the settlers are determined To Repell him, and they Drive him from the top of the tree. He falls to the forest floor.



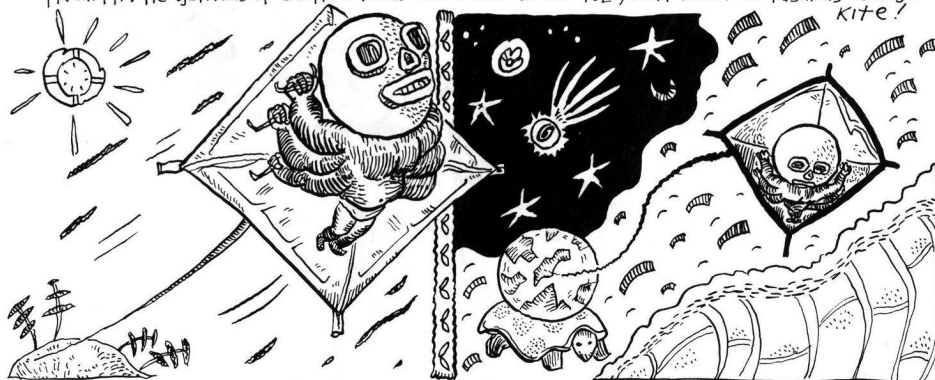
BUT NOW PRIMITIF grows Axes in his arms! He sets about Felling the entire Forest.



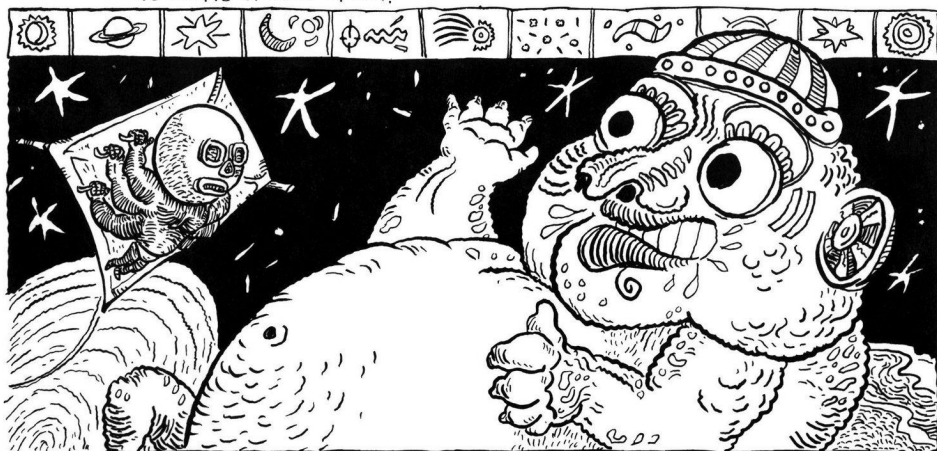
While he's trimming the chopped LOGS, PRIMITIF sees the Animals of the trees floating to the ground as they die. Without their habitat, they cannot survive. Then he espys DELATERRE—



The God is busy planting the seed of an oak tree. "Perhaps Now is my chance to Flee!" thinks PRIMITIF. He gathers up chopped wood and chews it into pulp, from which he fashions a huge Kite!



Catching a gust of wind into the Air he flies! "HA!! Safe from the Gods, and with extra ARMS to BOOT!" PRIMITIF is well pleased. But before long he's flying too high, and he drifts up into space!



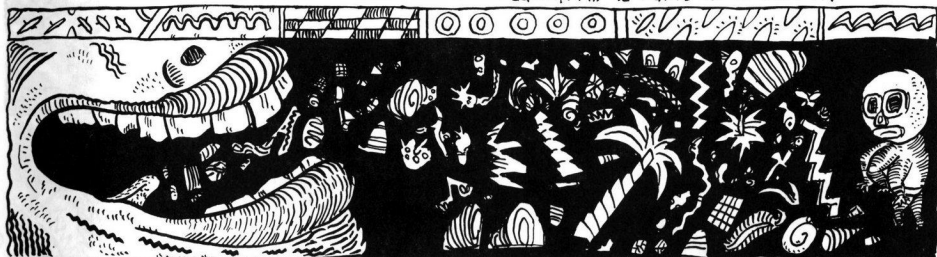
He arrives at the dwelling place of yet another strange God. He is Huge, Fat, Ugly and grotesque. Slobbering and Drooling, this monster welcomes PRIMITIF. "Who can this be?" thinks the Hunter, a little afraid.



"I AM THE GRAND BOUFFE!" shouts the Huge God.
"You, HUNTER, ARE MY GREATEST FRIEND AND ALLY!"



The God explains that He and DELATERRE are enemies. "All I want to do is eat the earth. All he wants is to save it."



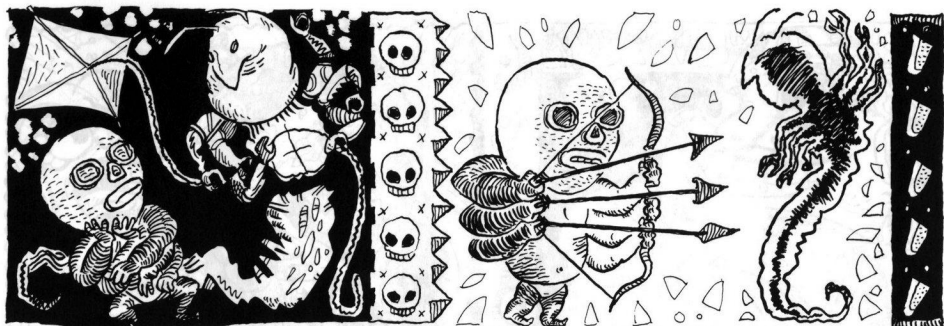
Saying this He gives thanks to PRIMITIF, for BRINGING him so much food, in the shape of Wood, stones, soil, trees, GRAIN, Jewels, Animals and fish. PRIMITIF is disgusted at the sight!



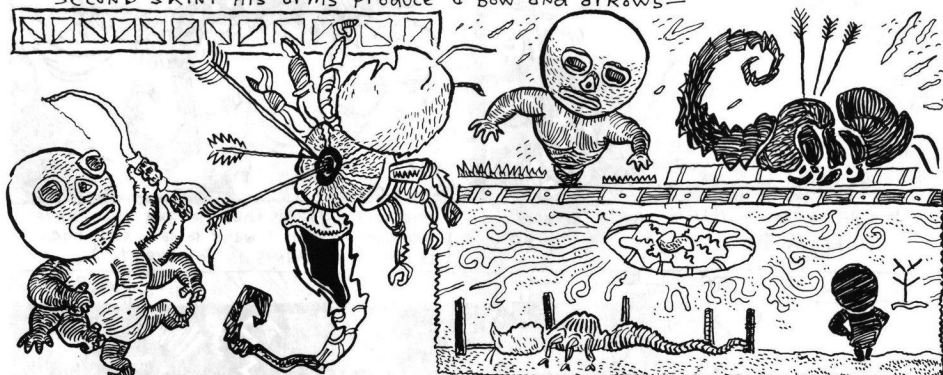
And he is deeply ashamed, saying "Am I to Blame?"

Looking Back, he can see that the Whole Earth is poisoned by what he's done.

At last, DELATERRE seizes his kite string and reels him in.



"Why did you Rescue me? Why Not leave me to Die out in space." — "You might be more grateful," says the God. Far from it, PRIMITIF intends to exorcise himself of the Second SKIN. His arms produce a Bow and arrows—



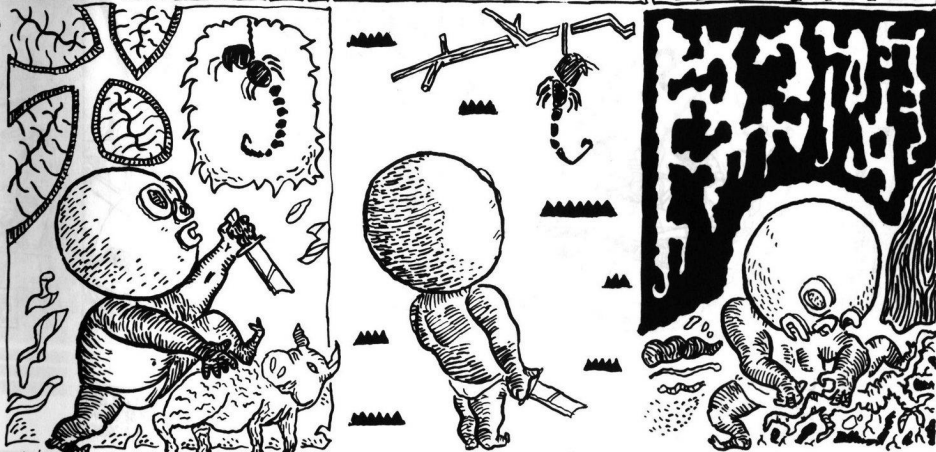
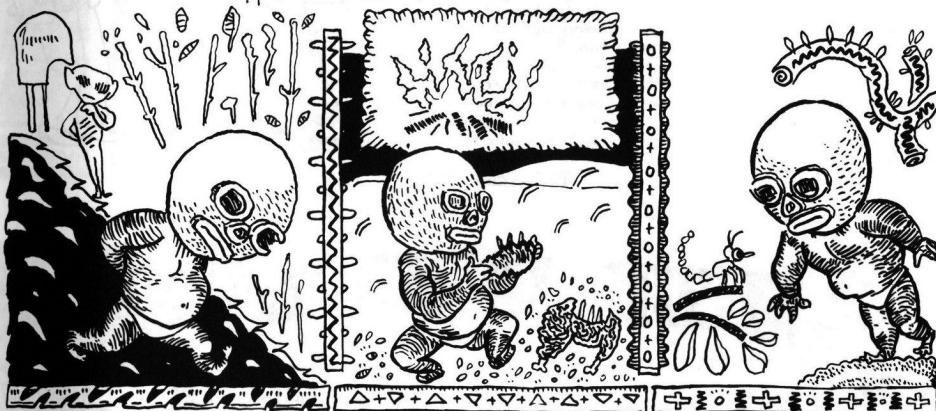
And he shoots DELATERRE through the heart. The arrows are tipped with poison. With the God's death, PRIMITIF's extra arms vanish at once. Now he picks up the corpse, and stakes it out in the desert to dry under the sun.



Then he hangs the shrivelled remains from a tree. But at his home, he finds the Chunk of Earth waiting for him. To his astonishment, it has taken root in the floor of his hut, and has sprouted little trees, crops, seaweed — even jewels and shining stars!



He is silent for many days.



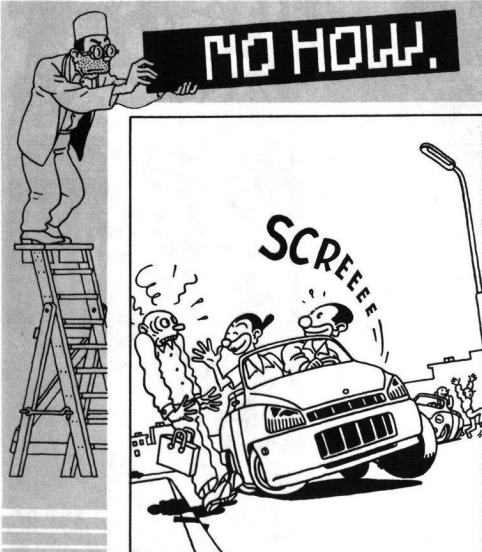
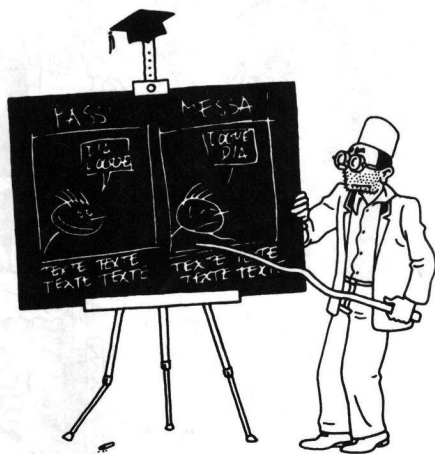
Thereafter, whenever PRIMITIF goes hunting for meat, he sees DELATERRE'S corpse hanging there where he hoisted it. And every time, he releases his quarry and settles for eating Roots instead.

LIFE IN OUR TECHNOLOGICAL AND HIGHLY CIVILISED WORLD IS NOT ALWAYS THAT

SIMPLE. It often requires a universal knowledge for us to cope with the countless problems that confront us every day. In this respect, our education system is severely lacking. Universities offer only hyper-specialisation instead of a somewhat broader perspective. It is this 'panoramic' view that we have tried to develop through a series of courses conceived and analysed by nationally and internationally recognised professors. Here you will find no tedious theories but concrete examples. Problems are examined one by one, so that you can select the best solution presented to you. From these few lessons, we hope that you will enjoy the same pleasure that we had creating them.

For optimum utilisation, each 'No How, Yes How' is composed of two parts, the 'No How' and the 'Yes How'. Each in turn is made up of three distinct elements: the illustration, the word balloons and the commentary. The proper way to obtain the best educational benefit is to examine these three elements in logical order. You begin with the commentary of the 'No How', continuing with the illustration as well as the corresponding word balloons. Then you proceed in the same manner with the 'Yes How'. On a second reading, if you are particularly struck by the profound significance of the 'No How, Yes How', you can pause for a while to contemplate the harmony of the ensemble. In this way, our doubts will be lifted and we will at last be able to live with both feet on the ground.

Dr. Ben Cine



THERE ARE STILL SOME POLITE DRIVERS AROUND, BUT MUCH TOO FREQUENT YET IS THE PRACTISE OF OTHERS WHO GIVE PEDESTRIANS A CLOSE SHAVE!



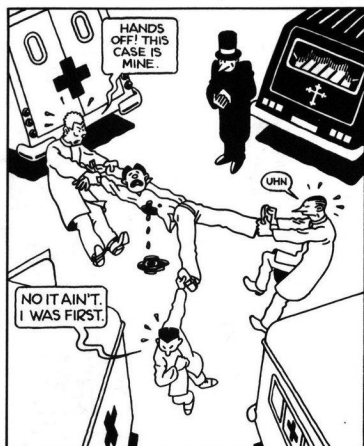
PEDESTRIANS: DON'T GET CRUMPLED BY ANY CAR. BUY THIS LATEST ADVANCE IN GARB AND SAVE YOUR SKIN. THE LACQUER-SCRATCHER SUIT LETS YOU GET ACROSS!

NO HOW.

YES HOW!



A SHORTAGE OF AMBULANCES MIGHT LEAVE OUR SICK AND INJURED FELLOW HUMANS IN DIRE STRAITS. OUR AMBULANCE ATTENDANTS ARE OFTEN ABLE TO PREVENT THE WORST CASES.



FOR THE SAKE OF GOOD HEALTH CARE, LET'S HAVE AN AMBULANCE CORPS THAT HAS ENOUGH VEHICLES ON-CALL TO ASSURE THAT PATIENTS ARE HANDLED AND MOVED WITH DISPATCH AND CARE!

NO HOW.

YES HOW!



THE WEATHER DOESN'T ASK US HOW WE WANT IT TO BE. SO IF WE WANT TO STAY HEALTHY, WE'VE GOT TO ADAPT OURSELVES TO THE CHANGEABLE WEATHER.



BUT WE MUST NOT ONLY PROTECT OURSELVES AGAINST THE EFFECTS OF BAD WEATHER, WE'VE ALSO GOT TO THINK ABOUT HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF WHATEVER THE WEATHER DOES.



NO HOW.



INTELLIGENCE ISN'T DIVIDED FAIRLY AMONG THE PEOPLE. THE SMART PEOPLE KEEP GETTING SMARTER, THE DUMB ONES STAY DUMB. YET, THERE'S NO NEED FOR AN INTELLIGENCE GAP!



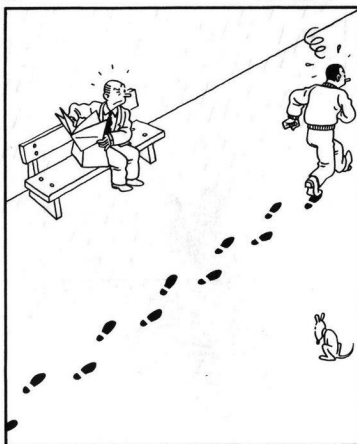
YES HOW!



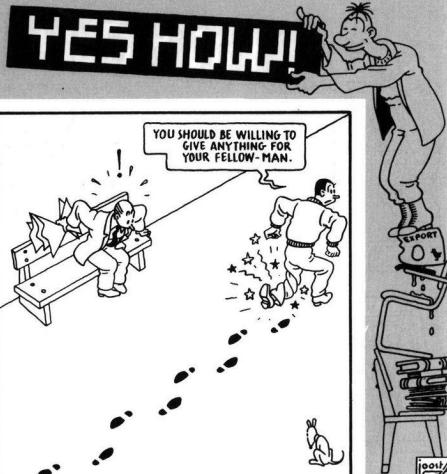
THE BRAINS OF DUMB PEOPLE CAN BE TURNED OFF. THEN BY WAY OF A DIRECT CONNECTION THEY CAN LET THEMSELVES BE LED BY SOME BRAINIER FELLOW.



NO HOW.



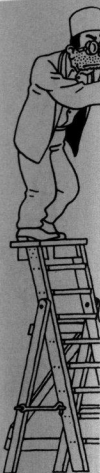
IN THE PROCESS OF WALKING, I DIVIDE THE WORLD INTO TWO PART: ONE PART TO MY LEFT, THE OTHER TO MY RIGHT. THE ROUTE THAT I TAKE DETERMINES WHO APPEARS IN WHICH HALF.



YES HOW!



THE OTHERS GET NO SAY ON THE MATTER. ONLY I DECIDE WHICH HALF THEY APPEAR IN. BUT PERHAPS I CAN LEAVE THEM A SENSE OF SELF-RESPECT BY KEEPING THE WAY MY PATH GOES OPEN.



NO HOW.



IF YOU'RE AMONG THE FAVORED AND HAVE GOOD TASTE, AND HAVE FURNISHED YOUR HOME WITH FLAIR, YOU CANNOT RECEIVE GUESTS IN YOUR GILDED CAGE. YOU'VE GOT TO WATCH OVER THE ESTHETICS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

YES HOW!



OR SHOULD YOU HAVE YOUR BEST FRIENDS COME BY AND JOIN YOU IN ENJOYING THE BEAUTY, SO AFTER THAT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN - RE-FURNISH AND SHOW OFF YOUR LATEST GOOD TASTE.



NO HOW.



IF YOUR FELLOW WORKER GETS CARELESS, OR IS ABOUT TO MAKE A TERRIBLE SLIP, WOULD YOU WARN HIM? EVEN THO' YOU'D BE SPOILING THE MOOD?

YES HOW!

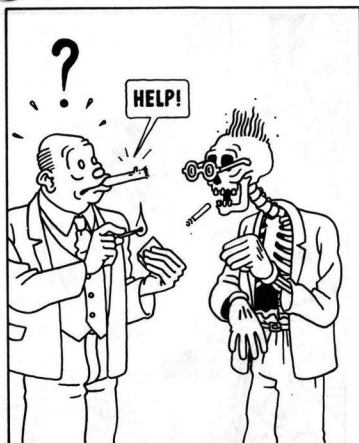


OF COURSE NOT! YOU WILL KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT! THE BEST OF MOODS PREVAILS, AND THAT'S A GUARANTEE OF A LONG AND GOOD COLLABORATION.





NO HOW.



SMOKING CIGARETTES CAN BE HAZARDOUS FOR YOUR HEALTH. IT'S EGOTISTIC TO THINK ONLY OF YOURSELF. THINK OF THE FATE OF ALL THOSE BUTTS!

YES HOW!



EVERY DAY THOUSANDS OF 'EM BURN UP TILL DEAD DO YOU THINK IT'S NICE TO HAVE EVERY SHRED OF LIFE IN YOU SMOKED UP TILL YOU'RE ALL IN ASHES?



NO HOW.



DUE TO DIFFICULT WORKING CONDITIONS A PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER MAY TAKE SOME PICS THAT DON'T TURN OUT. THIS MIGHT COST HIM HIS JOB!

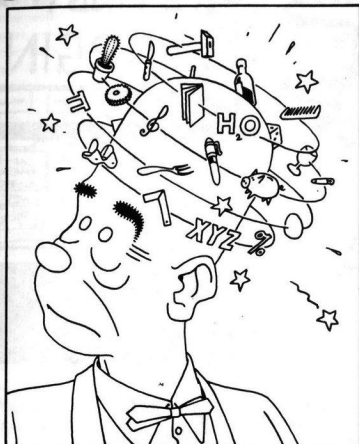
YES HOW!



WHEREAS HE CAN OBTAIN FAME WITH THE SAME UNSUCCESSFUL PHOTO, PROVIDED HE COMES ON WITH SKILLFUL TACTICS, AND DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION.



NO HOW.



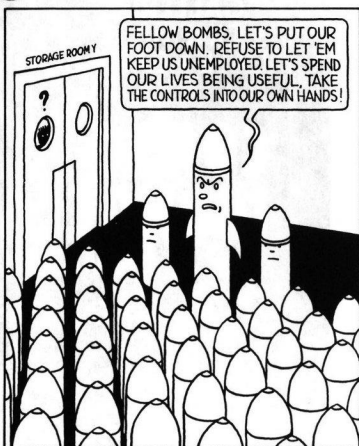
THINKING, THINKING, THINKING... THE GEARS OF MY MIND JUST KEEP GRINDING ON. I'VE THOUGHT UP HUNDREDS OF WAYS TO COOL OFF MY JITTERY NOGGIN.

YES HOW!



THAT'S HOW I GOT THE IDEA OF HAVING MY HEAD REPLACED BY A DOG'S. OR WOULD IT BE BETTER TO LET MY BRAINS BE TRANSPLANTED INTO A DOG'S HEAD?

NO HOW.



EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD BOMBS LIE IN STORAGE. AS LONG AS THEY AREN'T RUSTY, TO KEEP ON SILENTLY MENACING ANY POTENTIAL ENEMY. THIS IS INHUMAN. A SCANDAL!

YES HOW!



IF THERE'S STILL ANYTHING LIKE DEAL JUSTICE IN THE WORLD, ALL BOMBS MUST GET THEIR CHANCE TO FREELY EXPAND AND BRING SOMETHING TO A SUCCESSFUL END.

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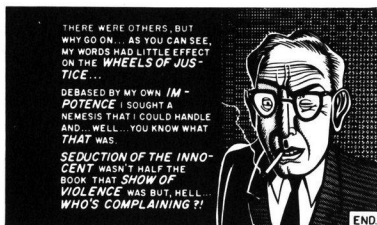
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THE MAD MEN

BLAB!



distrust of authority that put out leaves in the Sixties. Useful stuff to be built on and very hopeful for future issues.

But maybe *Blab!* will need a touch of the Gilberts. Beautifully produced, worth its sizeable cover price, still it's got a problem. Among its strips is a piss-take of Dr. Fredric Werthman, suggesting that it was the failure of his earlier books as a criminal psychiatrist that turned him on to the then popular Guy Fawkes of comics. Now I loathe FW with the best for what he did to comics, but he was more important than that; and if we are going to understand EC's importance beyond sheer revelling in it, we'll have to do more than just slag off their enemies. If we understand them, maybe we'll begin to understand ourselves. Buy *Blab!*, then argue with it.

—Martin Barker

Blab! 1 and 2, £6.95 each plus post from: Monte Beauchamp, P O Box 25537, Chicago IL 60625, USA

Martin Barker is the author of *A Haunt of Fears* by Pluto Press.

THE SMALL PRINT

FLESH AND BONES

Plug in your Jesus nite-lite and read the hot poop on microwave-oven suicides! There's been some really intense newsprint zines bursting from America's sick white underbelly this year (*Forced Exposure*, *Chemical Imbalance*, etc.) but this new one beats 'em all, if it's 100% trashy entertainment you're seeking. One third of this maniacs' digest is comics, another is mad *National Enquirer* cut-ups. The rest is music and if you like to frug to the melodies of Killozero and the Bobby Sherman Bloodbath, then hey teenrocker, *Flesh and Bones* is your kinda zine! The illustrated interview with Hoboken Arttoonist Kaz is well at home among the Manson-Partridge Family centred talk with Red Kross and the cold hard fact on US bubblegum (you'll never believe some of the brand names!) There's enough op-art graphics and strange info here not only to expand your mind but to send it hurtling into orbit. This one should be a weekly! —JB

£1.50 plus post from: 351 Beechwood Avenue, Middlesex, UK, UB8 4E, USA.

BIC

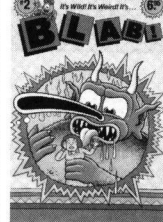
There's a heart-pumping energy straight out of a film story-board to the chase scenes, where Bic, the school speed demon, tears after a thief. Ed Hillyer expands this incident into a test of conscience for our 'hero'. Will he resist the lure of a Raleigh ten-speed racer? EC confidently controls layouts, facial expressions and body language, slant, accents, sound effects, even photocopy collage. His crisp expertise in everyday drama avoids the humdrum by addressing those small evils, those questions of scruples. Buy it and demand more! —PG

65p plus post from: 56 Nether Street, London N12 7NG.

Ed Pinnert reviews all the latest British Small Press Comics on the **FAST FICTION** mail order lists (free for an SAE/IRC from: 27 Bracewell Road, London W10 6AF) and runs the **FAST FICTION** Stand at London Comic Marts in Central Hall, Westminster (next dates December 12th and February 6th from 12 noon, admission free).

READ *BLAB!* at the same time I was reading a new book by James Gilbert called *A Cycle of Outrage*, which is a cultural history of the US in the Fifties, looking particularly at the anti-media campaigns. What a contrast! There is dry old historian Gilbert, dissecting with style and accuracy, but with no humour and with no enthusiasm for the media (especially comics) that were being attacked at that time. And there is *Blab!*, another in the long line of EC Comics-fanzines. It bursts with joy and commitment to the medium, it is full of delight and delights, even if it doesn't tell me much that is new about EC with all its Gaines and advantages.

Is there room for another such fanzine? Perhaps, but only if it isn't just more of the same. Surely there can't be endlessly more memorabilia, interviews with colourists, scriptwriters, the son of the mailman who delivered Kurtzman's letters, and lost pencil-sketches of the Crypt-Keeper. But *Blab!* shows signs of being a touch more, because now it is targeting the links between EC and those who come after, in particular the underground comic artists and writers. It is beginning to ask the really crucial question.



Granted, EC comics were a watershed, a high-point, rarely if ever to be matched. But what is their heritage to us? What did they do to the psyches of the kids who grew up in their nightmares? In a series of reminiscences, including Alan Moore, Charles Burns, Moebius and Gilbert Shelton, we

begin to assemble the picture. EC comics, and especially *Mad*, sowed the seeds of radicalism or

GARAGE BAND

PULP!

HERE'S MORE EVIDENCE of the pollination buzzing between comics and animation, as Soho studio The Film Garage soup up their own snazzy print vehicle *Pulp!* Grant White, designer of *Forbidden Planet's* blipvert among others, masterminded the first model with animators

Pete Bishop and Marc Kitchen-Smith, the minds behind *Time Out's* cinema ads and the 'Star Trekkin' video. They've corralled an eclectic band of contributors, some familiar to comics, others new to them. Marc and Pete's own first strips unleash their cartoon energy bril-

liantly, especially on 'The Pump Bros.', Marc's stand-out centrespread. Pop paper regulars like Simon Cooper, Stephen Appleby and the *Brute!* brats perform reliably, but some of the newcomers let the side down. In particular, illustrators Alan Adler and Ed Briant offer very slender first performances. Rather than grapple with an original complete story, they've resorted to minimal con-

tent and slack 'To be continued' endings. Unlike animators, illustrators tend to put all their thinking into individual pictures, so they often lack the narrative ideas that good comics need. Even so, *Pulp!* will be a positive venue for new converts flush with the romance of doing comics, providing some of these graphic acrobats can get past the first date.

—Paul Gravett

Pulp! 1, £1.50 plus post from: The Film Garage, 143 Wardour Street, London W1.



'SOME CARS ARE SO LAZY!!' SAY THE SELF-SERVICE PUMP BROTHERS

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS IN GUERRILLA WAR.

© 1985 M O I S E W I T S C H .

SOME EXCERPTS FROM
THE C.I.A. WAR
MANUAL FOR
REBELS
(IN NICARAGUA)

"CREATE A MARTYR BY ARRANGING A VIOLENT
DEMONSTRATION THAT LEADS TO THE
DEATH OF A LEADER"



"GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CAN BE
NEUTRALIZED BY SELECTIVE USE OF
VIOLENCE"



"IMPLICIT TERROR SHOULD ALWAYS BE USED"



"EXPLICIT TERROR ... SOMETIMES"



"ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!"

"BE SIMPLE AND CONCISE, USE THE APPROPRIATE TONE OF VOICE TO VILLAGERS. BE NATURAL"



"REMEMBER THE TARGET IS THE MINDS OF THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY POPULATION"



"VILLAGERS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO GIVE NAMES OF SANDINISTA INFORMANTS"

"KILL RANDOM CIVILIANS AND EXPLAIN IT WAS AN ACT OF THE DEMOCRATIC GUERRILLAS"



"REMEMBER THIS IS A HOLY WAR!"



NOTE.

"A TERRORIST ENGAGES IN VIOLENCE IN VIOLATION OF LAW AGAINST PEOPLE WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES TO BE AT WAR. THE VICTIMS OF TERRORIST ATTACKS ARE UNARMED, UNDEFENDED AND UNWARY."... JEAN KIRKPATRICK. (WHO HAS A CONTRA TERRORIST BATTALION NAMED AFTER HER)

REF. ROLLING STONE DEC. 1984. SOBERANIA #14. ASSOCIATED PRESS, AND TOM HINKLE.

"NICARAGUA JAMÁS SE RENDIRÁ"

END.

SOMETIME AFTER FIVE A.M., A COCK CROWS, SHATTERING THE QUIET OF THE STILL MOUNTAIN NIGHT....

KRAAA-A-OA000!

NORTHERN NICARAGUA, FEBRUARY '86, THE DAVID JONES COFFEE PICKING BRIGADE CREAKS, GROANING, INTO LIFE....



THE FIRST FEW ISOLATED BUMPS AND GROANS QUICKLY BECOME A CRESCENDO OF MUTTERED CONVERSATION AND THE CRASHING OF BOOTS ON WOODEN SHELVING....



...OUR BEDS IN THE CORBACHO, OUR HOME NOW FOR NEARLY A MONTH.



BREAKFAST, LIKE EVERY OTHER MEAL AT LA SUANA, WAS RICE, BEANS AND TORTILLA - FLAT CORN BREAD, TOUGH AS LEATHER...



BUT TASTING WORSE!

DAWN BROKE OVER FOREST CLAD HILLS AS WE WALKED TO WORK



UNTIL RAPHAEL, OUR CAPITAS, TOLD US WHERE TO PICK . . .



AQUI!
CORTAMOS
TODO
AHORITA!

THERE WERE ALSO ANTS AND GIANT SPIDERS, BUT THE MOST FREQUENT PROBLEM WAS WASPS' NESTS IN THE BUSHES.



LOOK, ANOTHER
WASPS' NEST.

OH YEAH,
RAPHAEL!
AVISPAS!

"CORTAMOS TODO" (WE ARE CUTTING EVERYTHING), THE UNRIPE GREEN BERRIES, AS WELL AS THE RIPE RED "ROJITOS," AS IT WAS THE END OF THE HARVEST.



THAT MEANT WE COULD PICK FASTER BUT INCREASED THE CHANCES OF GETTING STUNG BY THE CHICHIGASTAS - BRIGHT GREEN CATERpillARS, WITH SPINES LIKE KILLER NETTLES!



AARGH!
SHIT!
OW!



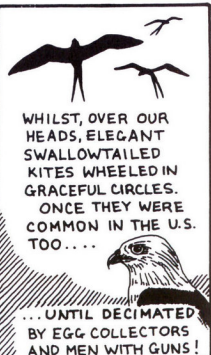
NO PÍCAN MUCHO
LAS AVISPAS!

RAPHAEL SEEMED TO BE IMPERVIOUS TO THEIR STINGS!

NOT ALL THE WILDLIFE WAS MALEVOLENT



BEAUTIFUL BUTTERFLIES ABOUNDED.



WHILST, OVER OUR HEADS, ELEGANT SWALLOWTAILED KITES WHEELED IN GRACEFUL CIRCLES. ONCE THEY WERE COMMON IN THE U.S. TOO . . .

... UNTIL DECIMATED BY EGG COLLECTORS AND MEN WITH GUNS!

IT WAS A LONG STRETCH UNTIL DINNER. CONVERSATIONS GREW LONG AS WE DISCOVERED COMMON INTERESTS...



WHAT! YOU'RE A COMIC FAN AND YOU'VE NEVER READ V FOR VENDETTA?

I ONLY READ 2000 A.D., REALLY...

RAFAEL!

THE HARDEST PART WAS CARRYING BACK THE HEAVY SACKS FULL OF BEANS OVER OFTEN STEEP AND CRUMBLING SLOPES.



BY THE TIME THE LORRY BROUGHT THE FOOD WE WERE SO HUNGRY THAT EVEN THE RICE AND BEANS WERE WELCOME.



AFTER DINNER, WE SORTED THE GREEN BEANS FROM THE RIPE ROTITOS. NICARAGUANS, WHO HAD SORTED THEIR OWN, WOULD COME TO HELP AND TALK...



(ARE YOU GOING TO COME TO THE PARTY?)

(NO. I DON'T GO TO PARTIES. I AM AN EVANGELICAL.)

THEN SOME OF US WOULD STOP TO HELP MEASURE THE DAY'S HARVEST. WE RARELY AVERAGED A QUARTER OF WHAT MOST NICARAGUANS COULD PICK...



WHILE THE REST OF US HAD A WASH, WROTE, OR JUST TOOK IT EASY...

BEFORE QUEUEING FOR THE DAY'S FINAL DOSE OF RICE AND BEANS....



AFTER THAT, THERE WAS A CHANCE FOR THOSE OF US WHO SPOKE SOME SPANISH TO FIND OUT A BIT ABOUT THE OTHER PICKERS....



(SO WHAT DO YOU GROW IN YOUR CO-OP?)

(OH, BEANS, MAIZE, A LITTLE SUGAR CANE...)

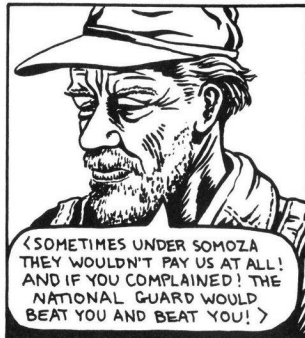
CONDITIONS SEEMED HARD TO US. THEY WERE HARD! AND UNLIKE THE NICARAGUANS, WE WERE JUST PASSING THROUGH...

BUT THE PEOPLE WERE UNANIMOUS THAT THINGS WERE MUCH BETTER SINCE THE REVOLUTION, WHICH THEY CALLED, SIMPLY, "THE TRIUMPH"...

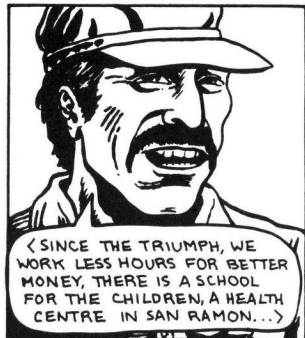
BUT BETTER WAGES, CONDITIONS, SCHOOLS, WERE NOT ALL THAT MATTERED TO THESE PEOPLE WHO HAD SO LITTLE...



<...THREE CHILDREN, BUT TWO DIED, ONE OF THE FEVER AND THE OTHER IN CHILDBIRTH...>



<SOMETIMES UNDER SOMOZA THEY WOULDN'T PAY US AT ALL! AND IF YOU COMPLAINED! THE NATIONAL GUARD WOULD BEAT YOU AND BEAT YOU!>



<SINCE THE TRIUMPH, WE WORK LESS HOURS FOR BETTER MONEY, THERE IS A SCHOOL FOR THE CHILDREN, A HEALTH CENTRE IN SAN RAMON...>

WHENEVER I HEAR REAGAN TALK ABOUT NICARAGUA, I THINK OF THE MAN WHO SLEPT ON THE SHELF BELOW ME. ONE NIGHT I TALKED TO HIM, AS THE LAST PARROTS FLEW OVERHEAD TO THEIR ROOSTS...



<THE MOST IMPORTANT THING? IS THAT NOW WE ARE FREE!>

I ASKED HIM WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE SINCE THE SANDINISTA REVOLUTION...

HIS ANSWER WAS THREE WORDS...



AHORA SOMOS LIBRES!



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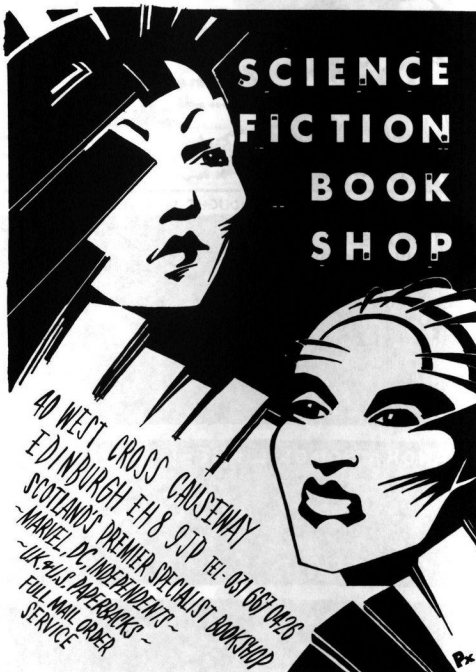


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I'M ONLY DOING THIS TO CALM YOU DOWN

Roger Sanchez

After the Somoza dictatorship was overthrown in 1979, the Sandinista government used comics in their literacy crusade to put across their ambitious social policy. As an educational tool, comics are ideal in poor countries where most people have no access to TV or films. The political cartoons of Roger Sanchez in the popular Sandinista daily *Barricada* have made him Nicaragua's premier political cartoonist. With a knife-sharp wit, he castigates the US personified as Uncle Sam, rich capitalists, corrupt bureaucrats and the Contras or national guard of Somoza. Not that he confines himself to these targets; some of his funniest cartoons ridicule macho revolutionaries who continue to oppress women while proclaiming women's liberation. In this book some explanations have been added, because the point of a joke can be subtle. Roger Sanchez can and does assume a high level of political sophistication from his readers. Often his cartoons are far more than jokes. He uses them to educate, saying more with a few scratchy lines than most people can say in volumes. But then as the man on the telly says on the back cover of this book: 'This is serious'.

—Spencer Woodcock

Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign £2.95 80pp Paperback. From bookshops or order by mail, adding 45 pence post and packing. From NSC Stores, 23 Beverden Street, London N1 6BH.

WINSOR MCCAY

John Canemaker

I've always marvelled at McCay's surreal worlds, but reading this sensitive biography I can also start to understand the compulsions behind them. The most significant revelation concerns his elder brother Arthur, whose depressive behaviour led to his being committed to an asylum, where he remained till his death. Winsor McCay was haunted by this secret family tragedy, because he realised how easily it could have been him. The paranoid nightmares of 'The Rarebit Fiend' and the dream realms of 'Little Nemo' take on a deeper meaning; through them he is sharing his fears and fantasies, rather than bottling them up like his brother. Every time Nemo or the Fiend wake up safe in the last panel, McCay confirms his own hold on reality. And through private and professional turmoils, he could always lose himself in that strange peace he found at the drawing board.

—Paul Gravett

KNIVES AND FAWKES

TROG: FORTY GRAPHIC YEARS

Wally Fawkes

STOP! STOP! You're turning into Pigs! squeals a terrified Flook, as his two overweight guests metamorphose into gigantic hogs. A crucial moment in the 'Flook' story reprinted (for the first time ever) in this excellent new book. This was Wally Fawkes' art and story-telling technique at its peak in the mid-Sixties, when the strip was being written by George Melly. Condensed into daily packages of information, the story races along, each of the four frames filled with more ideas than you see in a month's worth of an average newspaper strip. Working for entrepreneur Scoop's new food glossy 'Posh Nosh', Flook graduates to his own TV Food Show, where the excess-induced hallucination described above convinces him of the perils of gluttony. Politicians soon move in to exploit Flook's evangelistic zeal, putting him at the forefront of a national ban on all food!

This is one of the best stories from Flook's Silver Age. It combines the satirical-political elements that would later dominate the strip with the whimsy and charm that typified Compton Mackenzie's and Robert Raymond's 'Flook'. By common consent the best writer of the strip, it was George Melly who gave it such awe-inspiring depth: brilliant varied stories; sharply observed characters, even minor figures fully realised; scathing satirical humour; and a running commentary on all the trends in popular culture through the Fifties and Sixties.

At this time Trog was turning in his finest ever artwork for the strip. He breathed life into all of Melly's characters, delineating every nuance of their foibles and expressions with razor-sharp skill. Backgrounds were also solid and convincing, depicting real settings in London, both interiors and cityscapes, with absolute accuracy. Combined with all this is his impeccable skill in turning the script into

a comic strip—a daily continuity strip as well, one of the hardest jobs to do properly. Trog's work in this area is seamless, invisible; you forget you're reading a comic.

I speak as the owner of the complete run of all the 'Flook' dailies (well, almost complete), lovingly clipped and preserved by my Gran, sent to my father and handed down to me, who put them in order and pasted them into books. I read and re-read each story until I knew them by heart. I love 'Flook'. It is the unsung artistic success of British comics, with an identity and quality all its own, unlike any other strip here or abroad. Yet apart

from three *Daily Mail* children's books from the Fifties (now collector's items), the Sidgwick & Jackson 1970 book and *The Peasants' Revolt* pamphlet, 'Flook' has never been substantially reprinted anywhere—which to me

is heart-breaking. This book goes some way to redressing the balance.

The 'Flook' story is only one section of this book. There is also a large selection of Trog's political cartoons from the press, with dates, captions and useful notes on the subject matter and context. Then there's the portrait gallery, displaying Trog's incisive draughtsmanship in *Punch* cover paintings and spot illos. The commentary is by long-standing friend and art critic Frank Whitford, and he provides an affectionate and well-informed appraisal of Trog's work.

In his introduction, Raymond Briggs also bemoans the lack of respect and praise that should rightfully be accorded to Trog. The whole book is quite emphatic on the point that Trog should be taken seriously as an Artist. An inspiring thought. Britain, you've taken Trog for granted too long—you should all be grateful that this book exists.

—Ed Pinsent

Fourth Estate £12.95 192pp Hardback

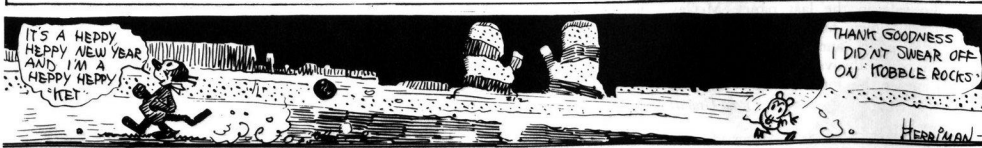
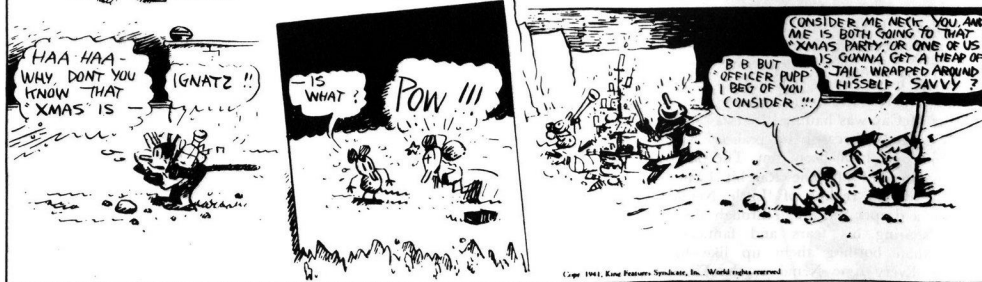


MCCAY'S RAREBIT FIEND AWAKES FROM A SUFFOCATING DREAM—1907

W K R A Z Y K A T



"THE YULE TIDE" COMES TO COLONINO'S POOREST OF POOR - A TRIPLE LATE.



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CALVIN AND HOBES

Bill Watterson

The newspaper strip is an unique form of comic art. Where else can you reach such a large audience? Even local free papers have guaranteed deliveries to anything over 50,000 homes. I have found that having a regular space to let my imagination run in is a challenging but rewarding experience. Unfortunately many newspaper strip artists do no more than turn out ordinary 'Knock! Knock!' jokes, the result of editorial constraints as much as creative constipation. However, there have been many prime examples of newspaper strips. My Hip Parade would have to include 'Krazy Kat', 'Little Nemo', 'Peanuts' and 'Gasoline Alley'—all strips free of the pretensions and pyrotechnics of 'genre' comics. With their own internal humanity, none of these have needed to prey on or play up to the pedantic sensibilities of a select audience.

And that is where the American strip *Calvin and Hobbes* comes into its own, with all credit to Bill Watterson, who appreciates that what comes best comes naturally. Calvin is a loud-mouthed six year old with a penchant for vigorous day-dreaming and living on the wild side; Hobbes is much calmer, a fine balance to Calvin's exuberant personality (though he is quite prepared to join in with Calvin's antics). As with the best partnerships, the two characters share a vibrant rapport which is all the more unique because, to everyone except Calvin, Hobbes is nothing more than a stuffed toy tiger.

The best strips in this anthology feature both Calvin and Hobbes (of which ninety per cent do). Others, with Calvin acting out his Outer Space alter-ego 'Spiff', may hark back to a rejected space



we are sitting amid the remains of twentieth century American comic books, engaged in a series of discrete, earnest dialogues upon humanity. In the background, the past is in ruins; its pathways are cracked and littered with the torn and partly decomposing pages of aged pulp magazines, old stories strewn about and not cleared away. Around us, in a half-demolished museum, stand the relics of comics' superheroic tradition. Here, in a shattered showcase, is a stuffed superhero; there in the corner, a battered Batman utility belt. Through the dust and grime, the museum labels are still faintly visible. The weight of past intelligence bears down on us. We are in the critical world of *Watchmen*.

Ever since the Sixties and Seventies, fans of American superhero comics have grown up and discovered, to their dismay, that something was lacking in their favourite boyhood reading. It was something, they felt, which could not be attributed solely to prolonged exposure to a repetitive formula, but also to some inbuilt flaw which prevented fans from dragging comics with them into adult life. For the dealers among them, comics were there as commodities and for the collectors, as hoardable ephemera. But from their juvenile reading, only the memories remained, protected from the ravages of time by nostalgia as securely as by Mylar plastic bags.

Emerging from this, there has been an increasing clamour from all sides for superhero comics with real characters and more sexual-political knobs on, for 'graphic novels' and even, occasionally, for that acme of fan respectability, comics with nothing superheroic about them at all. *Watchmen*, however, is not just a pro-

world, in which major nations, the real superpowers, are slugging it out for world domination as relentlessly as the heroes and villains of comic books.

Powerfully recreated in Dave Gibbons' illustration, not as they might look today but as they appear to nostalgic fancy, the fantastic form and feel of classic American comics gradually give way under the pressure of a prevailing realism. Nutter vigilante Rorschach's diary entries counterpoint the crime narration which, after the death of The Comedian in the first pages, proceeds to investigate each of his



former associates in the superhero team The Minutemen. The real human details of their lives, increasingly denuded of flash and filigreed costume drama, are recalled in the course of this and in documentary supplements. Each character revisits key scenes in their shared history, personalised by individual perspective and the passage of time. Meanwhile, the nuclear clock ticks ever more closely to midnight.

In literary history, the development of the novel replaced the supernatural and the metaphysical with the rational and the material. It rephrased the terms of human experience, internalising conflicts, putting them into the framework of everyday life. *Watchmen* recapitulates this history in the shadow of the twentieth century, when the scale of human conflict has grown to metaphysical, metahuman dimensions. *Watchmen*, as such, is the first great humane act in superhero comics and the first great graphic novel for the people who were after it. The Big One.

—Steve Edgell



parody strip that Watterson tackled in his early years, but they are not as successful. Because it's the sparkle of the interaction between a boy and his tiger that makes Watterson's *Calvin and Hobbes* a delight.

—Phil Elliott

Andrews, McMeel & Parker \$6.95/£5.95 Import 128pp Paperback. The strip appears in the *Daily Express* and a British collection will be out next year from Sphere.

duct tailored to satisfy these demands. It is also a grand summary reflection on superheroic themes and the conditions which produced them. *Watchmen* takes this now vastly influential portion of comics history and contrasts the questions of moral guardianship at the basis of superheroes' claims to a stake in human affairs against the history of the real respectable

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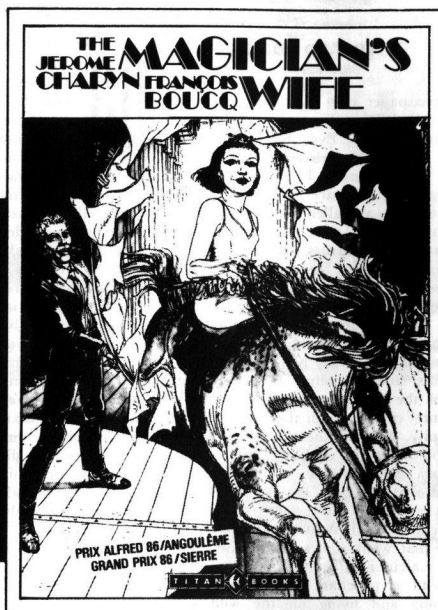
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"Muñoz and Sampayo work like one brain with two bodies: Sampayo's stories are elliptical and subtle; Muñoz's powerful expressionistic drawings take dazzling risks. There are no clichés here, only comics that dare you to look, think and feel."

— Art Spiegelman, author of *Maus*.

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TITAN BOOKS

IN THE GLASSHOUSE

LES CITÉS OBSCURES

François Schuiten and Benoît Peeters

PEOPLE MOVE through avenues and vistas, look out of windows onto other windows in other buildings, walk and work in cities of glass, steel and stone. Every time the comics artist tells a story, he has to reconstruct this world, but most pay little attention to using architecture to establish a scene or mood, a sense of place (one notable exception being Dean Motter and Paul Rivoche's *Mister X*, inspired by Le Corbusier with his bald head and glasses, living in his Radiant City which is almost as much a character as the people in it.)

With their *Cités Obscures* series, artist François Schuiten and writer Benoît Peeters begin everything with the city. They construct them carefully and ingeniously, hiding the seeds of bizarre secrets within them. Then they let the people inhabit them and cope with what they find. In their stories, the cities are the real stars—the mysteries to be pierced, the languages to be learnt and spoken once more, the trials to be endured, the messages from ancient builders that will eventually be heard. Schuiten draws these cities with great love and skill, dense with detail and subtle information, yet these are not pleasant places. They loom over their inhabitants and weigh heavily upon them, fantastic but oppressive, stunting them, pulling them to pieces with strange events and never giving them answers to their questions, but merely turning the screws so the speculation goes on, circular and airless.

The first book is *Les Mursailles de Samaris*, now published in English as *The Great Walls of Samaris* by NBM Books. The city of Xhystos, an Edwardian-Art Nouveau-Great Exhibition confection, is worried about possible war from its neighbour, the unknown Samaris. So they send envoys there, but none ever return. Franz, the latest to undertake the mission, travels to Samaris and discovers its secret. But the discovery of this secret destroys his world and we no longer know what we can believe.

The second and most ingenious book is *La Fièvre d'Urbicande* (The Fever of Urbicande). Urbicande is an immense gothic and Rationalist city,

built like some strange child of Frank Lloyd Wright and Albert Speer, towering over its tiny populace. Yet not all the city is 'rational'; divided by a river, the older half of Urbicande is random, unplanned, spontaneous. The City Architect Eugen Robick plans to build a third bridge to unite the two halves by tearing down and rebuilding the older district in the 'harmonious' manner of the newer half. But his plans are changed. A cube of unknown metal found in some excavations is brought to Robick. It grows, insanely, through flesh and stone without harming them, until it has become an immense metal grid which dwarfs and disturbs Urbicande

even as it unites both sides. It cannot be destroyed or even scratched, so they have to deal with this strange invader's effects on their lives, if they can.

These stories sound like fever dreams and that is how they are presented; detached in tone, dry and unspectacular, flattened of effect, the narrators seem not quite human, somehow incomplete. It's like watching rats in a maze, the way they are made to endure these events. We could ask what crimes are these people guilty of that they should suffer so? The answers might make even stranger reading. Remarkable as this series is, it is still very much by men for men. Women feature only as plot devices rather than people, one more feature in the overpowering environs.

A map in Robick's office shows us that all the *Cités Obscures* exist in a unified world. Robick himself makes a fleeting appearance in Samaris, although we don't find out how he comes to Urbicande. The clothes they wear are late Victorian, Edwardian and Deco Moderne and so are their machines. The two most recent books, *La Tour* (The Tower) and *L'Archiviste* (The Archivist), add as many questions as answers. There are layers and layers to uncover here.

—Trevor Phoenix

NBM Graphic Novel \$9.95/£6.95 Import 48pp Softback. NBM hope to translate the rest of the series, currently available in French from Casterman.

CRITICAL LIST

TWIST

Kitchens Sink

With Bagge, 'Bosko' and J D King's sophisticated cartoons, *Twist* revives much of that early '80s comedy mag *Stomp!*, but the line-up is broader. While you lose some of the close-knit *Stomp!* team energy, you gain a more varied laff mix, as the Friedman Bros., Robert Williams, Daniel Clowes and the rediscovered Basil Wolverton do the *Twist*. A humour shindig you'd be wise to miss!—JB

CONCRETE

Dark Horse

Paul Chadwick stands out among monochrome indies by virtue of his good art and unusual original ideas. He wants to tell ecologically sound, humanistic and gentle stories, but the mediocre rendering deadens their impact somewhat. Too much Mills & Boon-style illustration, bad composition, general dead wood.—EP

MARSHAL LAW

Epic

No matter how deliciously subversive Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neill's fetishist futurecop is, why create yet another expose of the underlying sickness of superheroes? OK, give them an indecent burial, but let's get it over with and move beyond genre demolition to the kind of inspired vision seen in the religious dementia of *Nemesis*.—PG

THE SILENT INVASION

Renegade

Turn up your lapels and hunch your shoulders, as we enter the Fifties as they really happened. Communist plots, Government conspiracies and flying saucers mess up the life of Matt Sinkage, investigative reporter. Michael Cherkas' artwork is influenced by European clear line and Larry Hancock's writing is truly paranoid.—BL

CAPTAIN OBLIVION

Harrar

Quite brilliant, in story terms a small masterpiece of construction. Curious though how Glenn Dakin tries to ally his gentle introspective mode with a much more upbeat story than usual, even involving politics, taboo Dakin territory. His artwork belies this—Quentin Blake illustration meets Jack Kirby layouts.—EP





INGEAR ATAR WITH

PRESENTS

THEE
WIGGY
MAGICKAL
WORLD OF
AUSTIN OF
OSMAN SPARE

HIYA
HONEY! WE COULD
MAKE MAGICKAL
MUSICK TOGETHA!

YOUNG RUSSIE SPARE
[1886-1956] COULD'VE
BEEN THEE NOO AUBREY
BEARDSLEY... 'CEPT HE
HAD A THING 'BOUT
OLDA WIMMIN!

PITH OFF
WEIRD OH!!

THROBBE

WOW! A
CRAZY
MAN!!!

BE THOU MY
TRUE 'BLACK
BROTHER'
FRIEND?

SOON HE'D
TURNED HIS BACK
ON POLITE
SOCIETY IN FAVOUR
OF SINISTER
SORCERY IN SOUTH
LONDON...

VISITORS WERE ALWAYS ASSURED OF SOME
JOLLY JAPES 'CHEZ' SPARE!

ZOS KIA CULTUS? POOH-PAH!
I SAY SPARE! 'TIS UNCOMMONLY
HOT IN THIS FILTHY HOVEL
OF THINE ALLO'A SUDDEN!

BEHIND YE
ALEISTER!!!
NYAK~NYAK!!!

THE
ANATHEMA
OF ZOS
A.O.S.

THO' OLD RUSSIE'S
FONDNESS OF SPIRITS
OCCASIONALLY PROVED
PROBLEMATIC!!!

NO SIGN OF
YE LATE NITE
BUS FELLAHS?

BUS
STOP

SPIRITS OF DEAD
COMPUTERS WHO
WERE KILLED IN
HITLER'S BLITZ!

SHAY...HIK!
DON'T I
KNOW YOU
FROM
SOMEWHUR
???

WHEN TIMES
WERE HARD AND
ART MATERIALS
SCARCE, A.O.S.
WOULD GLADLY
IMPROVISE IN
ORDER TO
CONTINUE HIS
UNIQUE ART!

► E N D ◄

AUTOMATICALLY
DRAWN AND
SCRIPTED BY SAVX
+ S. ROBERTSON © 87

TCHAH!
TH' LAST
SHEET!!
T' WOULD
BE A PITY
TO WASTE
IT!

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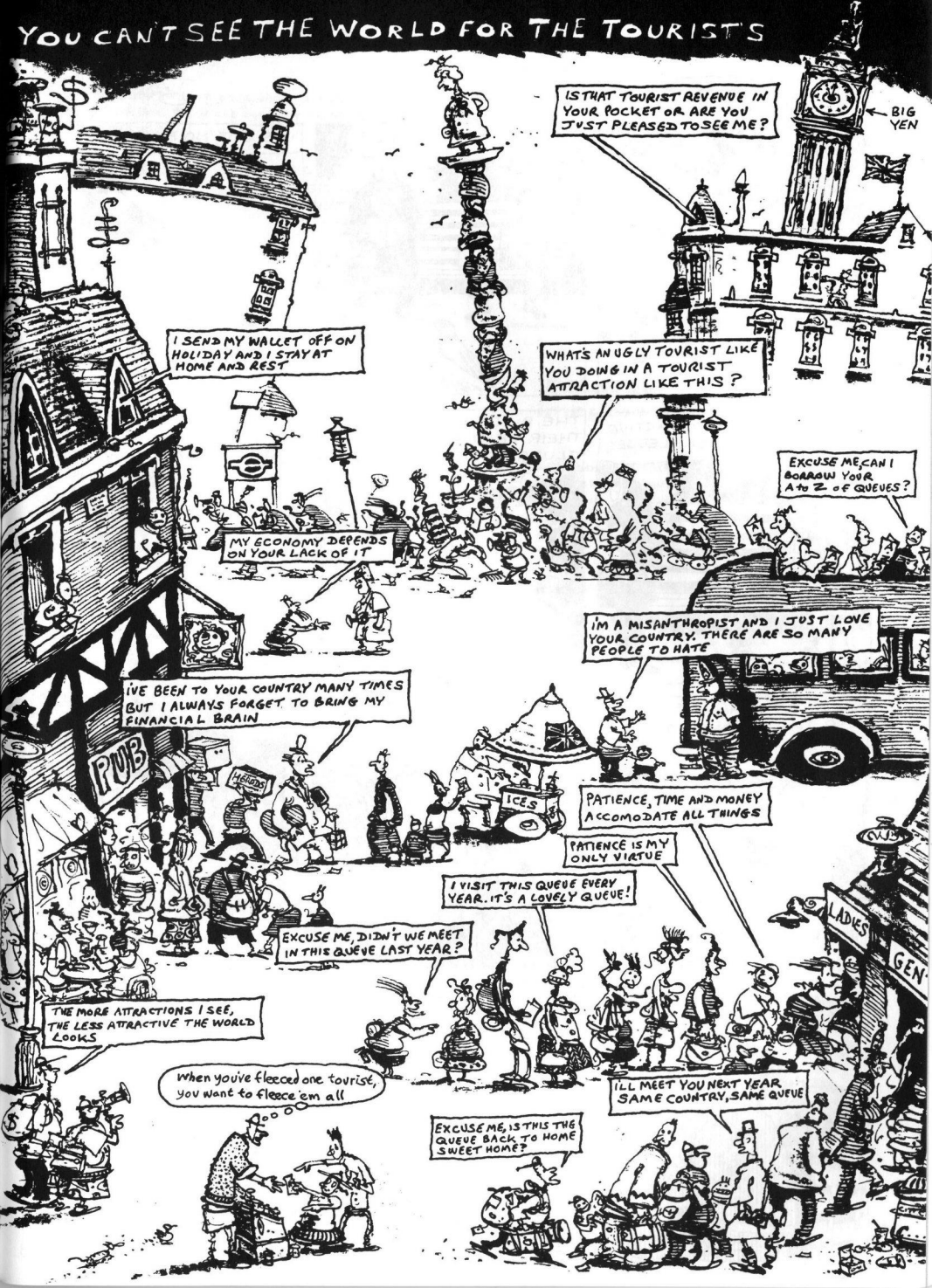
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IS THAT TOURIST REVENUE IN YOUR POCKET OR ARE YOU JUST PLEASED TO SEE ME?

BIG BEN

WHAT'S AN UGLY TOURIST LIKE YOU DOING IN A TOURIST ATTRACTION LIKE THIS?

EXCUSE ME CAN I BORROW YOU A TO Z OF QUEUES?

I'M A MISANTHROPIST AND I JUST LOVE YOUR COUNTRY. THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE TO HATE

PATIENCE, TIME AND MONEY ACCOMMODATE ALL THINGS

PATIENCE IS MY ONLY VIRTUE

I VISIT THIS QUEUE EVERY YEAR. IT'S A LOVELY QUEUE!

EXCUSE ME, DIDN'T WE MEET IN THIS QUEUE LAST YEAR?

THE MORE ATTRACTIONS I SEE, THE LESS ATTRACTIVE THE WORLD LOOKS

when you've fleeced one tourist, you want to fleece 'em all

EXCUSE ME, IS THIS THE QUEUE BACK TO HOME SWEET HOME?

I'LL MEET YOU NEXT YEAR. SAME COUNTRY, SAME QUEUE

I SEND MY WALLET OFF ON HOLIDAY AND I STAY AT HOME AND REST

MY ECONOMY DEPENDS ON YOUR LACK OF IT

I'VE BEEN TO YOUR COUNTRY MANY TIMES BUT I ALWAYS FORGET TO BRING MY FINANCIAL BRAIN

PUB

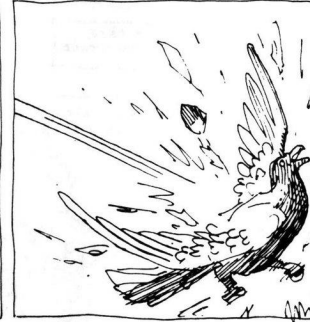
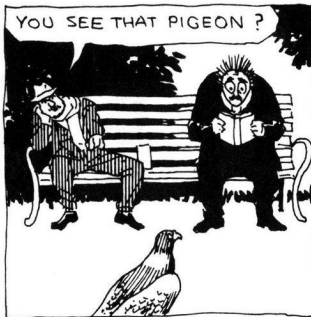
ICES

LADIES

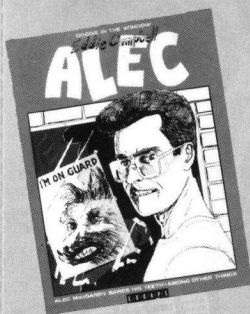
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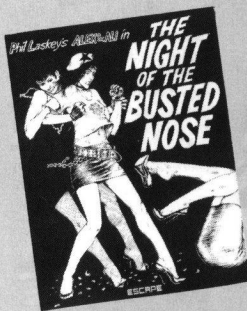
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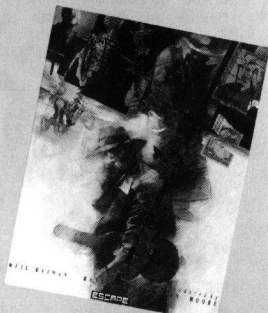
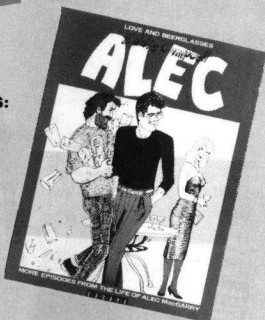
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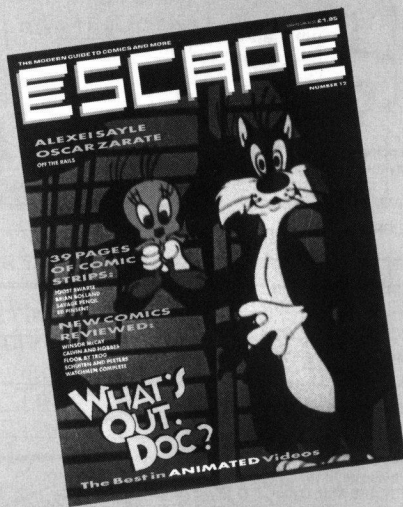
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1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
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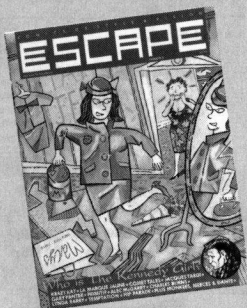
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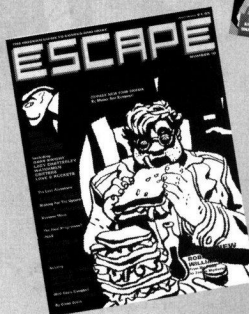
ISSUE NINE: □

Especial Espana! Daniel Torres/ New Spanish Comics/ Swiss BD Festival/ Watchmen/ Brutal Boys/ Richard Sala/ Sav Sadness/ Krazy Kat/ Plus Dr Faustus, Punk Memories & more! Cover by Fernando Vicente. 60 BIG pages



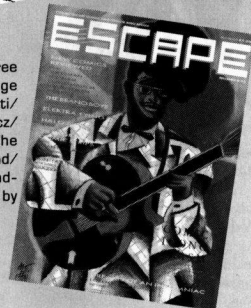
ISSUE TEN: □

Muñoz & Sampayo 20-page Drama/Robert Williams Interview/Tintin/Eddie Campbell/ Steve Bell/2000AD/Shaky Kane/Alan Moore on Maus/ John Bagnall/Plus New Comics Reviewed/Cover by José Muñoz. 64 BIG pages.



ISSUE ELEVEN: □

Comic Iconoclasm: Free Comics in Art 16-page Extra/Lorenzo Mattotti/ Halo Jones/Bill Sienkiewicz/ Baxendale & Reid—The Beano Boys/Brian Bolland/ New Alec/Ed Pinsent/Badger Tales/Panthra. Cover by Mattotti. 72 BIG pages.



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JASON AND CINDY

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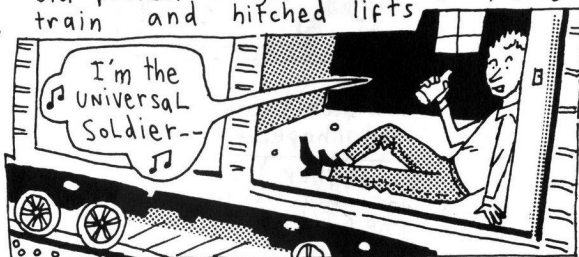


Love, Credibility,
and the FOLK
Generation!

Winter '64: Jason Goldberg left the tenements with a harmonica and 13 dollars in his pocket



He was on a Folk-trail (in search of old protest songs) roaming by freight train and hitched lifts



Spring '65: Jason began to gain some notoriety from his solo performances and anti-establishment views



This was just the kind of hero Cindy Foxglove was looking for--



Cindy was a sort of protest singer herself: She'd grown her hair long 'n' lank, learnt a few chords--

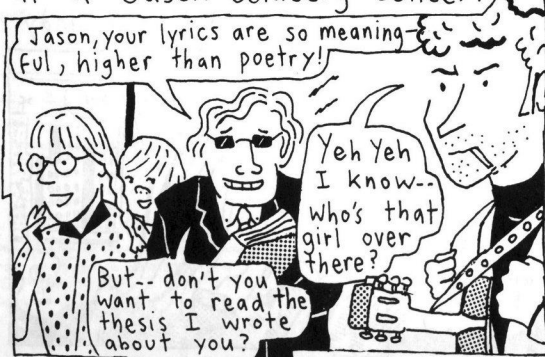
--and asked her rich Daddy to give her the correct start.



But things weren't going as well as she had hoped--

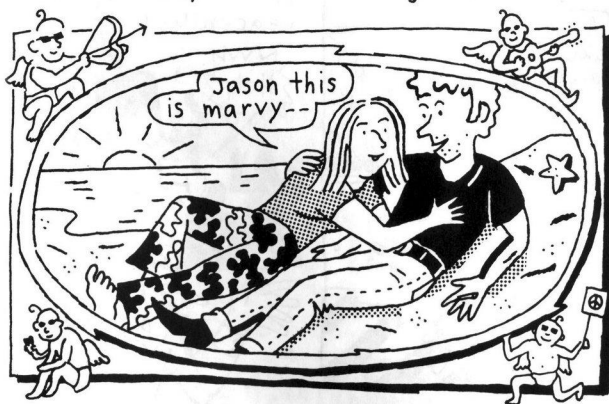


Early '66 - the horizon looked brighter: Cindy was invited to be bottom-of-the-bill at a Jason Goldberg concert





An unlikely romance began to bloom:



---Meanwhile in the offices of "Folk-Root" magazine, snubbed music critic Alvin Blum had been hard at work.



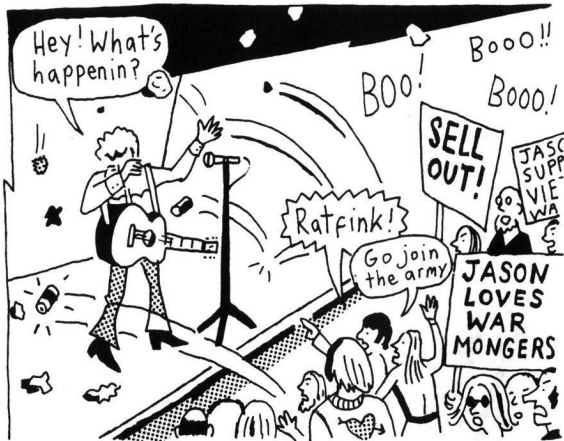
"Folk Root" issue 20 (Summer '66) hit the newsstands of Greenwich Village like a bombshell--



Back on the coast



--and so the next day:



Realisation dawned on Cindy's face--



She blamed herself

--and fled the city.



Jason also had to flee -- from enraged peaceniks!



-- He found anonymity out West in one of the new hippie communes--



Meanwhile "Folk root" built new heroes.



Not that Cindy would notice. She'd left that all behind--



CLONING IN LEICESTER

AFTER 5 YEARS of research, pioneer Bob Smart has managed to successfully 'clone' one of England's most futuristic comic stores, 'Fantasy World', and produce 'Another World'. The 'clone' is a perfect replica, right down to the same excellent service, huge stocks and vast selection—which includes all the latest imports, (Marvel, D.C., and independents), plus the best of the U.K., 2000 AD, VIZ, Escape, Dr Who, etc., with 1000's of back issues going back to the early 1960's. They also have 1960's role playing games, T-shirt, badges, posters, science fiction and fantasy paperback, fantasy art books, film, rock, martial arts and body building books and magazines. Also a large section of supernatural and paranormal material including Tarot Cards! Careful consideration has been given to the siting of this 'clone' and Leicester has been chosen as the place to bring 'Another World' in its city centre, at 23 Silver Street.

Further details of the opening date and time is soon to be announced in the Fan Press, or by contacting 'Fantasy World', 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. Telephone 0782 279294.

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The first number tells the position of the entry this issue; the second its position last issue; the third is the number of previous issues in which the entry has appeared. The Ficks Finger of Fate identifies entries new to the Hip Parade.

☆ 1-3 WATCHMEN 3

By Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons and John Higgins, DC-Titan

▶◀ 2-2 CRAZY KAT 4

By George Herriman

▼ 3-1 LOS BROS 4

HERNANDEZ
Jaime's Love and Rockets and Gilbert's Heartbreak Soup, Fantagraphics-Titan

▲ 4-7 HUNT

EMERSON 4

Calculus Cat and Lady Chatterley, Knockabout



PART OF THE MARVEL PANTHEON CREATED BY JACK 'KING' KIRBY

▲ 5-29 WILL EISNER 4

The Spirit, The Building and others, Kitchen Sink

▲ 6-26 ROBERT

CRUMB 3
From Zap! to Hup!, Last Gasp

▲ 7- FRANK MILLER 4

Dark Knight, Ronin, Batman: Year One, DC

▲ 8-9 TINTIN 4

Hergé's Adventures, Methuen

▲ 9-17 MUÑOZ 2

& SAMPAYO
In Raw, Escape & Sinner

▲ 10-12 BILL 2

SINKIEWICZ
Elektra, Epic and Shadow, DC

▲ 11- MOEBIUS 1

From Ar-Zach to Aedena, Epic Graphic Novels

▲ 12- SWAMP THING 2

Alan Moore, Steve Bissette John Totleben, DC-Titan

▼ 13-4 GLENN DAKIN 3

Paris and Captain Oblivion, Harrier

▲ 13- STEVE BELL 3

If in The Guardian

▼ 15-11 VIZ COMIC 3

Britain's Shoddiest Periodical

▲ 16- JACK KIRBY 1

The King, from Captain America to Captain Victory

▲ 17- LEO 3

BAXENDALE

Little Plum, Minnie the Mix, Willy the Kid and Spotty Dick

▲ 18- ZENITH 1

2000AD's Superhero by Grant Morrison and Steve Yeowell

▲ 19- LONE WOLF 1

AND CUB
Koike & Kojima's samurai epic, First

▶◀ 20-20 MAUS 1

By Art Spiegelman, Pantheon, Penguin and Andre Deutsch

▲ 21- HUGO PRATT 1

Corto Maltese, NBM

▲ 22-28 WINSOR 3

McCAY
Little Nemo in Slumberland

▲ 23- JUDGE DREDD 2

He's the Law in 2000AD

▲ 24-30 MILLIGAN 1

& MCCARTHY
Paradox, Vortex

▼ 25-8 EDDIE 3

CAMPBELL
Alec, Escape and Deadface, Harrier

▲ 26- GARY PANTER 1

Gentleman Jimbo, Father of the Ratly Line

▲ 27- HOWARD 2

CHAYKIN
American Flagg! and Timeo, First



▲ 28- OINK! 1

The Power of the Pig pen

▼ 29-25 PHIL ELLIOTT 2

Gag! and Gimbley, Harrier

▲ 30- SAVAGE 1

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PRIZE WINNERS

Here are the five plucky pollsters picked out of the spin dryer who win one of five copies of Art Spiegelman's Maus: John G. Davies, Isle of Man; Ritchie Graham, Stirling; Dominic Regan, Glasgow; Rik Shepherd, Stockport; Andrew White, Cheltenham. Next issue you could win one of five copies of the **MGM CARTOON FESTIVAL** video

BEST IN ISSUE

Here are the top five favourite strips from last issue. Voted for by ESCAPE readers. Be sure and tell us which strips in this issue you like the most.

- 1 A Winter's Tale
- 2 Mr Mamoulain
- 3 Alec
- 4 Insomnia
- 5 Panthra

Tim Budden
Brian Bolland
Eddie Campbell
Lorenz Mattotti
Mark Robinson

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What crucial comics or cartoons are really YOU right now? Exercise your franchise today! Send in your personal Hip Parade of up to TEN Fave-Raves, (If you can't think of TEN list FIVE) either on the handy pull-out form in this issue or on a postcard to: ESCAPE, 156 Munster Road, London SW6 5RA

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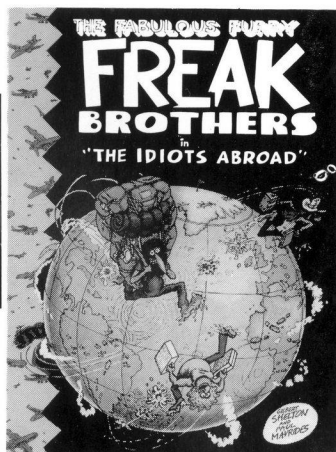
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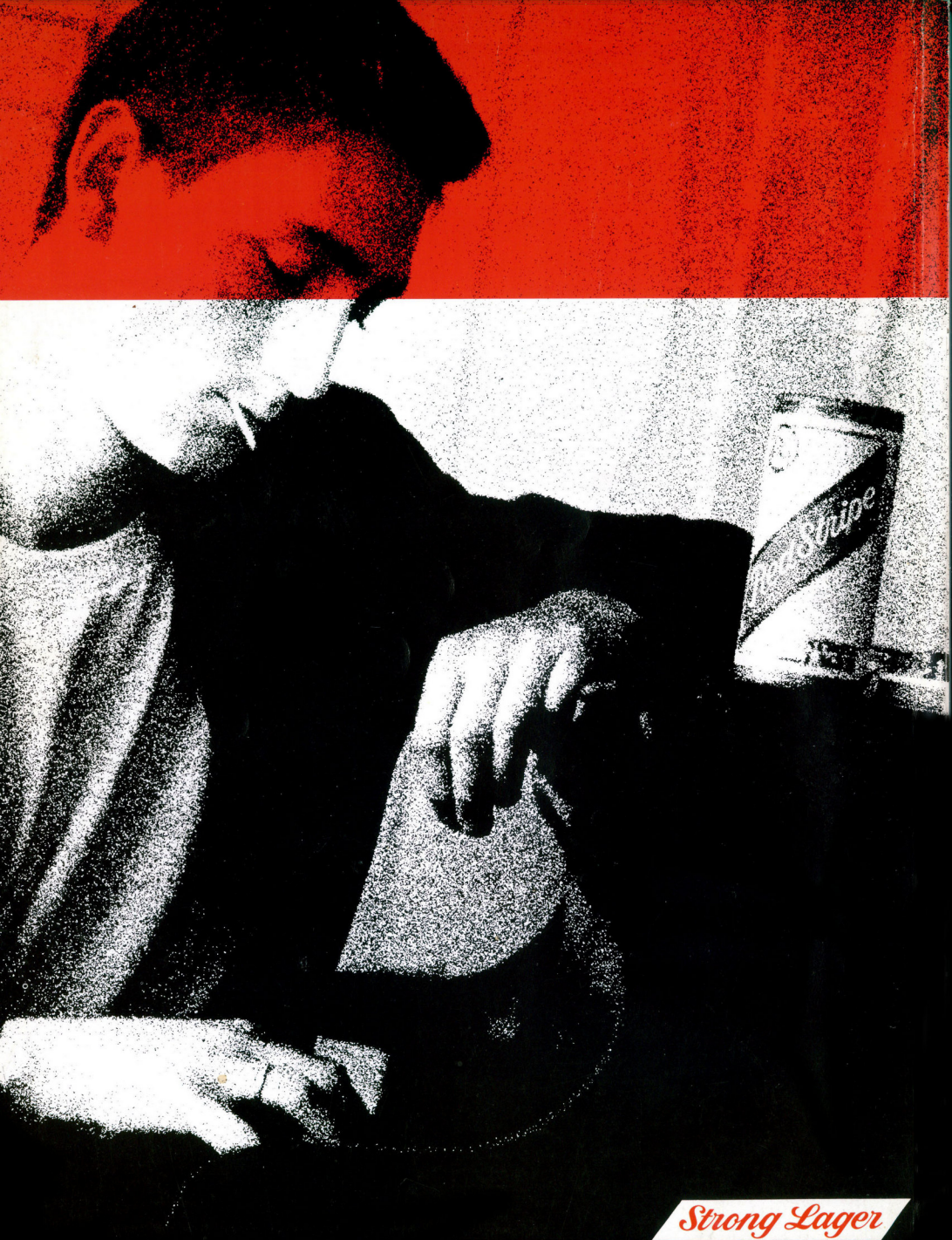
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